# Absolute Duo Volume 2

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# アブソリュート・デュオ！Ⅱ

## 嘘と真と赤い紅

MF文庫
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アブソリュート・デュオⅡ
嘘と真と赤い紅
柊★たくみ

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## アブソリュート・デュオⅡ　嘘と真と赤い紅

《焔牙（ブレイズ）》――それは超化された精神力によって、自らの魂を具現化させて創り出す武器。《新刃戦》の結果、《Ⅱ（レベル2）》に昇華することとなった俺とユリエ。そんな中、黄金色の髪の美少女・リーリスが現れ、「九重透流（ここのえ とおる）。今日からあんたはあたしの《絆双刃（デュオ）》よ」と言い放つ。なんと彼女は《異能（イレギュラー）》な俺と《絆双刃》を組むため、学園に転入してきたのだ。しかも《特別（エクセプション）》と呼ばれるリーリスの《焔牙》は具現化不可能とされる《銃（ライフル）》の形をしていて……!?　パートナーとの絆で未来を掴み取る、学園バトルアクション第2弾！　異能と特別、《唯一無二（アンリヴァルド）》な二人が巡り逢い、物語は加速する――！

# アブソリュート・デュオ！II

嘘と真と赤い紅

Absolute Duo

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穂高みやび（ほたか）

「……で、でも、もし走りきれなかったら……また、迎えに来てくれる？」

ユリエ＝シグトゥーナ

「私もトールと同じ――《復讐者（アヴェンジャー）》です」

「誰かが俺の前でやられていく……そんなの御免だからな」

九重透流（ここのえとおる）

「キミとの勝負は《新刃戦》以来だな。ただし今回は勝ちを譲って貰うぞ」

橘巴（たちばなともえ）

「残念ね、ユリエ＝シグトゥーナ。
もう少し張り合いがあると
期待していたけれど……」

「……終わりよ」

銀色の髪と
割れたガラスの破片が
キラキラと光を反射する中、
黄金の少女は《銃（ライフル）》を回し――
銃口をユリエへと向けた。

# Absolute Duo

冷たく澄んだ空気に包まれた静謐の森。
人の手が入っていない自然、
生命力に溢れた木々の奥深くに泉があった。
ぱしゃっと水の跳ねる音がし、
同時に動く影。

そこには一糸纏わぬ
見目麗しい少女がいた。

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# Prologue

Unrivaled Blaze

"<<One kind of a blaze>>……. Same as me but at the same time isn't the same. However------"

A peaceful forest covered with a clear cold atmosphere.

A nature untouched by man; and deep inside the forest filled with life, a spring was there.

*Posha* the sound of water dripping was produced; and at the same time, a shadow moved.

A beautiful girl without a single cloth on her stood there.

She has a nice style which can be said with just one look, a bountiful chest and slender limbs.

The water drops along all of that were *Kira*Kira* dazzlingly reflecting the sunlight.

Half of the girl, who has the beauty of the sun, was soaked in water starting from her thighs, and occasionally, she would dive her head into the water and would swim like a fish.

Why is such a person inside an untouched forest like this, playing with the water.

The gold girl was **waiting there**.

She was adapting to the presence of the forest by playing with the water, and waiting for her **prey**.

"……It's here."

She grasped the presence of the long-awaited prey, and muttered.

Further up her sights, a group of young deer brimming with life appeared to moisten their throat through the spring deep inside the forest.

Yes, they were the prey, and the gold girl was waiting there to hunt them down.

However, a question regarding the hunt comes to mind.

That's because, not only is the girl not wearing any clothes, there is not a single gun, bow, or knife on her body.

But-----

The next moment the gold girl mumbled something with her lips------

A <<Gun[Rifle]>> is being held in her hand as if it was a magic trick.

She quietly directed the gun she is more accustomed to, compared to any other gun towards the group of deer------

She then set the gun nozzle towards the head of a doe.

Those eyes that showing strong determination slightly narrowed down and--------

The gunshot destroyed the silence.

In an instant, the doe with its heart pierced through collapsed, and luckily the other deer which weren't the target ran away; because of the gunshot the forest was then filled with noise from the birds flapping their wings.

"Fufu, Perfect."

The girl made a satisfied smile and lowered her gun------in the next moment, this time the <<Gun (Rifle)>> disappeared as if it was dispersed.

Her hunting ended right here.

She has no thought of bringing back the prey she hunted down.

Finally, after taking a glance at the doe lying down on her side, the girl made a big swipe with her blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair using her hands and water droplets fell off.

She then wore the clothes she threw at the waterside, and left the spring.

After half an hour the girl left the forest------

Beside the doe lying on its side at the waterside, a small deer is standing there cuddling closer.

It probably did not understand its mother's death yet, it continuously licked the mother's face many times.

But-------

The moment, the fawn licked the tip of the nose after some time, the doe twitched its ears and immediately blinked its eyes.

After a while, the doe raised its head and after slowly getting up and reconciling with the fawn several times, it will soon depart from the waterside and enter deep into the forest--------and runs towards the group.

On the body of the doe running through the gaps between the trees, **there is not even a single wound on it**.

Even though it was certain that the gold girl had shot through its heart.

The forest soon regained its silence.

As if no event had occurred at all.

"Welcome back, Ojou-sama."

The person who greeted the girl who has returned back to the mansion was a female butler wearing a waistcoat and a wing collar shirt.

"I am back, Sara……..even if I say this, I am going to head out again immediately."

"Where are you heading to this time?"

The butler asked her master who said she would be heading out again immediately after she had just returned home.

"It's Japan."

"……..Japan?"

Towards the butler pondering about that, the girl made a big swing with her blonde hair using her hands.
Yellow Topaz

"I heard of someone being the *same kind as me*."

"Same as Ojou-sama, you say?"

"Yes. Now that I have heard about it, I will have to go and meet up with him."

Making a smile, the gold girl said her own alias.

"Same as me and at the same time isn't the same……as an <<Exception>>."

And thus------the <<Irregular>> and <<Exception>> met.

# Chapter 1 『Lilith=Bristol

## Part 1

When I woke up, it was already morning.

My head felt heavy thanks to not having enough sleep, and I was still sleepy.

However, before I could fall asleep, when I thought back about the confession Julie made--------the event last night that I kept thinking about over and over again. I didn't feel like going back to sleep.

"I am also the same as Tooru-------an <<Avenger>>."

Under the moonlight, when I was told that the silver girl who was exposing the scar on her back was wishing for revenge, I just lost my words to say.

In order to be an inhuman existence------an <<Avenger>>, the silver girl crossed the seas to come here.

I thought she would have a suitable reason for that.

But, I would have never thought she was the same as me, someone who had their heart burnt from the flames of revenge.

Inside the time carved by silence, although Julie soon said [Let's go back] and headed back to the room-------even when I entered my bed after that, I could not fall asleep and in the end, I only fell asleep when the sky was starting to turn white.

When I closed my eyes, Julie's figure carved with a long scar floated inside my mind.

I have no idea what kind of circumstances had happened for her to be scarred like that. But------

(An, <<Avenger>> huh……..)

Those sorrowful eyes Julie made when she said those words.

(The same……..as me. Huh……)

Maybe I should look for a chance to listen to the continuation.

Or, should I wait for her to tell me.

While pondering, I turned around to my back.

When I averted my eyes from the light, and turned to my back.

Up ahead, the thing I grasped was-------

*Munyuu*.

Something soft.

(What is this……..?)

I moved my hand in a dazed manner.

*That something* I grabbed had a modest bulge enough to fit into my hand and it was something soft covered with a thin layer of cloth.

It was soft, and *that something* shape would change when I moved my fingers. It had resilience however and it would turn back to its original shape when I separated my fingers.

If I would to say an example, a marshmallow, mochi, or maybe-------and like that, those kinds of thoughts were floating up…….

“Nuuu……”

*That something* let out a voice.

“……..”

Sweat flowed down.

Right now, in order to gain conviction on what *that something* I was touching was.

When I timidly opened my eyes, over there was------

Possessing transparent-like snow (Snow White) colored skin, the silver (Silver blonde) hair girl was sleeping peacefully there while breathing.

……Just like my conviction, my hand was touching the silver girl's breast.

(Why are you sleeping beside me!? Wait, more importantly------)

I regained my composure, and the moment I tried to separate my hand in panic-----

"Hyuuun……!"

*Maybe I hit a stimulating part*, the silver girl twitched almost at the same time while making a cute shriek and she embraced her own body.

……Luckily or unluckily, she was pressing my hand harder on her breast.

"U-wah, soft, wait, Uwaaaaaaaaaah!?"

Maybe it was from the stimulation, or maybe it was from my shouting-------

"----------Tooru……..?"

Ruby eyes
Her red eyes pointed towards me, and she said my name.

In an instant, I felt myself getting pale.

"Ju-Julie……!! Thi-this, errr…….!!"

"By this you mean……?"

While asking that question, Julie followed my sights.

And further ahead of course, was my hand being pushed towards her own chest……..

"Ah……..."

I found out her white cheeks were blushing to a sakura color.

"[……]"

Julie directed a perplexed expression towards me and I replied back with a stiff face-------

"I-I want to move my hand so, could you relax the strength in your arms?"

"------uh! Ja—……"

I urged Julie and she relaxed the strength in her arms.

I hurried and pulled my hand away, and mid-way------

*My finger pulled on something.*

"Hnnkunn……!"

Once again, Julie embraced her body while dragging my hand along.

Naturally, it caused my hand to fully feel Julie's softness.

"Julie, wait! My hand, my hand----------!!"

"Er-errr, Julie. Sorry about that……."

Around the time things finally calmed down, we were performing Seiza towards each other on top of the bed.

However, Julie's sights were at her knees. And her cheeks were slightly blushing in sakura color.

"……"

The silence hurts.

"I-I did not think you would be sleeping beside me, my hands accidently touched when I was changing my sleeping side……. ….then when I moved my hands to think what it was then……. …."

"……Was it something so hard that you have to do that to confirm……."

I will get scolded, or if I was told about the truth with cold eyes when I was prepared for it, I would get downhearted.

"Uh! N-no, that's…….it was the first time I touched a girl 's breast and it was very soft, I completely did not bother about the size of it……..wait, Nonononono that's not it……."

(Aaaaaah, what am I saying------!?)

"……."

Opposite to my panicking, Julie was once again silent.

Maybe just maybe------is this the end for me? Is it that so called social death?

"Ju-Julie…….?"

"…….It wasn't intentional right?"

Towards that question with upturned eyes, naturally I only swung my head vertically.

"Then it can't be helped."

"Errr……you will forgive me?"

"Ja---. In the first place, the cause was me breaking our promise and crawling into your bed as I pleased."

After saying that, Julie lowered her head.

"Sorry to break our promise, Tooru."

"No, I don't really mind but---------why were you sleeping here?"

The time I fell asleep was at dawn. Julie should have been sleeping on her bed until then.

Which meant, Julie crawled in after when I did that…….

"Because of **that talk**, I remembered the past……and felt lonely."

Julie looked at me apologetically.

"But, Tooru was already resting so, it was painful for me to wake you up……."

"……..Hnn, it can't be helped if that was the case huh."

"Thank you very much, Tooru."

You can sleep with me if you feel lonely. I was the one who said that.

Although I was surprised, it can't be helped because there was a reason, I thought that.

(Getting lonely from **that talk**…….which means, perhaps Julie's father is------)

When I was thinking about the talk last night, it was immediately interrupted by Julie calling out to me.

"By the way Tooru. Although it is in the morning, it is the time when we would usually be sleeping but, should we wake up like this?"

"You're right. I want to sleep a bit more but, I'm confident in oversleeping if I sleep now."

"Ja---Me too."

She smiled and Julie got off the bed.

Just like usual, she was probably going to change her clothes after taking a shower.

"Ah…….Ju-Julie."

"--------?"

I stopped her when she was about to head towards the dressing room with her change of clothes in her hands.

“Just now……a-about the breast, I am really sorry.”

“……..Nai. I don’t mind it so let’s drop that topic.”

Although Julie made a small swing with her head while saying that, she looked a little bit embarrassed.

The Kouryou academy's cafeteria area was wide enough for any number of students to relax and thanks to that, there wasn’t really a fixed place to have a meal.

But, it had become a normal occurrence for most of the students to have their meals at the same place.

And the partner to pass this time together with had become a normal event---------

“Go-good morning Tooru-kun, Julie-chan. You two are fast today……..”

A familiar voice was called out towards us when we were sitting side by side.

The owner of this voice was a petite girl, and she was someone with a quiet and reserved personality which could be understood by the tone of her voice.

However, the bulge of her chest was contrastive to that, and it drew in a lot of eyes since it was the most voluptuous of anyone in the class.

……As expected, it doesn't sound like the actual person herself.

"Good morning. We woke up a little bit earlier today." "Good morning, Miyabi."

Hotaka Miyabi. She was a first year like us, our classmate-------- it was only normal since there was only one class per year in Kouryou academy but-------this girl took her meals with us almost every day.

"Errrr……."

"-----?"

After slightly hesitating after directing her sights towards me and Julie respectively, Miyabi sat in front of Julie.

(……Perhaps, she was pondering about whether or not to sit in front of us?)

Both opposite sides of me and Julie were empty and judging from the current Miyabi, the possibility for that to happen was probably high.

Miyabi was brought up from an all girls school so she was bad with the opposite gender, but it had only been one month from

today, after enrolling to the school, I would hear out her worries and after many events, we became close enough that we could call each other by our names.

But even so, I could see she was still nervous, but hesitation over which seat to sit in was something trivial, and I was kind of happy when I thought she might have lowered her guard compared to the past.

"……Err, Tooru-kun?"

"Hn? What's wrong?"

While Miyabi was in a troubled state and her cheeks were slightly blushing, she moved her sights from me and the table alternately.

"What do you mean by what's wrong, that is what I want to ask ……Yo-you were smiling while looking at me from just now but, I was wondering why is that……..?"

It seemed the reason for her troubled expression was me.

I made a wry smile, in order to avoid telling her I was laughing from reminiscing.

"Now that I think back…….you are alone today. What happened to Tachibana?"

In a rare occurrence, there was no sight of Miyabi's <<Duo>>, Tachibana.

Covered with a dignified atmosphere, she was a girl who holds an adult atmosphere for someone who was the same age as us.

She comes from a martial arts family, she who holds outstanding abilities even in the class, had great results (but bad at English), on top of that she was good at looking out for others so trust would come to her from her surroundings.

"Ah……..Tomoe-chan should be waking everyone up right now."

"Everyone?"

"Un. There are a lot of people that would oversleep so, she does it so they won't be late……whenever it is this time of the morning, she would go around everyone's room and wake them up."

"Haha, that sounds just like Tachibana."

I didn't even need to ask, it was probably done voluntarily.

Only one month has passed after starting a new life away from their parents. Which meant, even though there was a dormitory advisor, it would be up to the female leader Tachibana to regulate the morning which could easily disorder the rhythm of their lifestyle.

I thought it was just like the steady and serious Tachibana.

The sight of her going around the rooms to call out the classmates, was clearly floating in my head.

(However-------)

"If I knew this was going to happen, I should have increased the meat and decreased the vegetables……..."

"Don't go having an unbalanced diet just because I am not here, Kokonoe."

"Ta-Tachibana!?"

Right after I murmured that, there was a marginally angry voice coming behind me.

When I turned around in panic, Tachibana was glaring down at me after hearing the conversation just in time.

"Good morning, Tomoe."

"Jaa. Good morning, Julie."

Gracefully moving her chopsticks until now, *chirin* after Julie lowered her head producing a bell sound, and Tachibana lowered her eyebrows and made a smile.

Looking at Tachibana's face loosening up, I took a relieved breath inside my heart.

"Why are you making such a relieved face."

"N-no, hahahaha……"

I was glared at once again, and I shrunk my body smaller……

“Seriously, a guy like you…….”

While making a sigh towards me, Tachibana sat in front of me.

“I-I can’t help it. For a young male like me, it is only natural to think of eating meat------”

“If you eat vegetables too, then there is nothing I will complain about.”

“Uu……..”

“In the first place, you only eat meat. Just like I said from before , you should eat more vegetables. Learn from Julie and Miyabi.”

When I looked over to both their trays, since she had a small body the amount Julie took was little, she had Japanese style salad, fried eggs, the main was grilled salmon and the combinations could be said to be a Japanese style breakfast. She also had half a bowl of rice.

It could be said to be quite a low consumption to pass the time until afternoon.

If it was me, my stomach would probably be making flashy growls half-way into second period.

Miyabi had a simple combination of a pot-au-fue and BLT sandwich, her drink was the usual milk.

(…….As expected, is it related to the reason why they are so big?)

I can't say where but, I secretly sent my sights over there and thought about it.

"Are you listening, Kokonoe?"

"------Uh! A-aah, I am listening and I get it. I will eat vegetables properly……..!"

"Umu, it's a promise……oh yeah, eat this 8 type warm salad. You should be able to eat this right?"

*Don* a plate of salad was placed in front of me.

"Ugeeh……..not that, n-no, won't Tachibana's breakfast become less……"

"Rest assured, I have already taken my share…….muu, while you are at it, how about spinach with kelp dressing on it? And also this cooked seaweed--------"

(Give me a break alreadddyyyyyyyyy!! The meat, the meatttttttttttt!!)

I raised a shout inside my heart from the small plate of vegetables being constantly added up in front of me.

Having several fractures, lacerations on every part of his body, and countless bruises.

Full recovery would take a month. However, this was only because he was an <<Exceed>>; if it was a normal person then it would take several months for full recovery.

It was the medical examination results of the injuries my friend Tora suffered during that <<New blade battle>>(Newcomer battle)--------no, doing her work in the backstage and targeting students with reputation, it was done by Tsukimi who was doing secret work.

"Why is Tora over here?"

After finishing our breakfast chat and everyone headed to the classroom, I saw a familiar small male prostrating himself on the table while sleeping.

"……Isn't it obvious I was discharged from the hospital, you idiot."

Responding to my mumbling with his sharp-ears, Tora made a yawn while stretching.

"I think there should be around 10 more days until discharge but……"

"Fuun, I can't keep resting for that long."

During Golden Week, we went to visit him in the ward around the premise of the school when we were in a stage where we could

move but, he immediately sent us away because of something about showing his pathetic state.

After that, I heard the discharge day and condition of his wounds from the nurse but, it seems Tora was pushy for his discharge.

"What are you going to do if you dragged your wounds just because you forced yourself. Keep quiet and sleep. Also there is that, you know there is a saying that a child that sleeps will grow bigger……..sorry, nothing."

"Who the hell is small!!"

Hearing that from behind me, Miyabi twitched from that angry voice and hid behind me as if she was scared.

"It's okay. That retort was for me."

"U-un…… …….. Ah…….!"

When I made a smile towards Miyabi who was grabbing my clothes tightly, she opened her eyes wide in an instant----------

She quickly separated her hands, and took a step back before apologizing.

"Haha, I won't bite."

Miyabi slipped a smile from the sentence that reminded her of the introduction we made during the first time we met.

"But, are you seriously okay? The wounds you got from ***her*** should be quite serious. Just like what Kokonoe says, I think it's better for your body to not force yourself."

"Judging by the way you said it, you already know about the situation too?"

Tachibana swung her head vertically from Tora's question.

On that day, it was great we managed to break Tsukimi's << Tebutje Fang sword>> but, I suffered extreme fatigue while the wounds on Julie's legs were serious, and thus both of us could not move.

Then, Tachibana and Miyaba contacted the academy side after looking at our state, and performed emergency treatment on all the injured people including Tora and the rest.

During that occasion, we explained to Tachibana and Miyabi about what happened--------including the secret of the <<Blaze>>--------so, they were already aware about the situation.

"I see, you two did my emergency treatment……Tachibana, Hotaka, it was a life saver. You have my gratitude."

Tora lowered his head.

"……."

"……..Tooru. What is with that face?"

"I'm shocked."

"Why are you shocked, Tooru?"

Julie tilted her head and *Chirin* a bell sound was produced.

"Nooo, that's because Tora is lowering his head towards someone."

"Don't open your eyes wide from something like that! Even I would lower my head when I really want to show my gratitude!"

"That's because it's Tora you know!?"

"What kind of image of me is inside of you!!"

"…….Tooru, Tora. Fighting is bad."

"*Giggle* *Giggle*, it's alright Julie-chan, this isn't a fight."

Miyabi made a small giggle from our small quarrel, and nodded towards Julie [Is that so?] question.

However, Julie tilted her head because she could not understand at all and *chirin* the bell shook.

"Oh yeah! You said you would lower your head when you really want to show your gratitude right. Then, you were saved by me and Julie during that time, so I'll have you show that gratitude of yours."

"Uuu……Gugu, Th-that's……kuh, i-it certainly is unpleasant……"

While I was making a spiteful smile at Tora, Tachibana [Are you a child] muttered that in a tired tone behind me.

After a while, although Tora *un**un* groaned, he made a complex expression while opening his mouth with a desperate tone.

"Al-alright. I will show you my gratitude so be grateful."

"It should be thank you there right?"

"Muguuh……! Gu-gu-gu…….Tha-tha-thatha……than…… ……..Haah!? No-now that I think back about it, if it weren't for me saving you in the first place, even you would be defeated too!!"

Damn it, he noticed.

"That's why we don't owe each other anything. You get it! However, you will show your gratitude to Julie!"

*Fuun* Tora made a rough snort and turned his back towards us.

"Seriously, I don't know whether I should call you childish, or you're existence is mean…….oh, it's the chime. See you later. Kokonoe."

Hearing the ringing sound of the chime signifying the start of the classes, Tachibana lightly hit my shoulders and headed towards her own seat.

Miyabi also left with a [see you later] before chasing after her back.

"Tooru. Let's sit down too."

Although I went to sit on my seat when I was urged by Julie, there was question that popped up at that moment.

"Wait a sec? It's okay for the class to start but, what about our homeroom teacher?"

There was no way it was going to be the girl wearing rabbit ears .

Which meant, another teacher should be a replacement-------

"Good Morning--♥ Did you all enjoy your GW? I think this is unlikely but, are there naughty children that played too much and forgot their homework? If there is then, please raise your hands—♥"

"-------Uh!!"

The moment we saw the rabbit ears coming into the classroom after the chime ended, me-------Julie, Tachibana, Miyabi, Tora and Tatsu stood up.

Each of us placed our hands on our own chest, and the instant we were about to say the <<Word that carries strength>>-------

"The class is going to start. Please sit down at your seats."

We could only stop our thoughts, from the words coming from Mikuni-sensei who showed himself after coming into the classroom after Tsukimi.

"You didn't hear me, Kokonoe-kun? The other 5 too. The class is going to start."

Once again ordered to sit down, we lowered our hips while in bewilderment.

(What's going on…….!?)

"Alright , let's begin our long returning HR---♪"

Exactly like what the owner of that evil blade that attacked on that day proclaimed, the HR has started.

As if that attack did not happen, she was making her usual, natural smile.

However, we were only bewildered since we know about the face under that smiling mask.

"Okay okay , regarding the <<New blade battle (Newcomer battle)>> we had just before the holidays, good work to those who won magnificently and although it is disappointing, to the people that lost too♪ it looks like there were several people that got injured from hustling a little too much but, Sensei is very satisfied to be able to see everyone's current powers ♥"

The part about got injured------although me and Tora were about to open our mouth to say whose fault was it by reflex, Tsukimi *pachiri* closed one of her eyes while placing her fingers on her mouth.

The matter regarding that attack was a secret; that was probably what she was telling us.

We know that without her telling us but, thanks to the main culprit of that incident lying so calmly, we were just barely maintaining our composure.

"--------With that said, just like what I explained beforehand, the <<Duo>>'s with good results will be able to receive the << Sublimation Ceremony>> as a special prize on Saturday. Errrr, the ones who will take it are--------"

The ones Tsukimi said were me & Julie, Tachibana & Miyabi, Tora & Tatsu, and 2 other <<Duo>> groups.

According to that, it seemed the standard of 3 wins and above was the condition to receive the special prize.

Originally, I would be happy to be able to receive the << Sublimation Ceremony>> but, now wasn't the time for that.

(What the hell is going on……?)

My head was in chaos.

I did not have to say the reason; it was about the reason as to why was Tsukimi still our homeroom teacher, and why did Mikuni-sensei------the academy side approved it.

But, during the time I was thinking inside my head, the HR was still continuing.

After that, we were told about the classes from now on, the interleague match with the 2nd year students, and that there would be a seaside school trip in July. Tsukimi then left the classroom from the chime signal and the class started after the general science teacher entered while she left.

The questions regarding Tsukimi, everyone related to that incident felt bewildered.

"What do you make of that, Kokonoe?"

When it turned break time, Tachibana came over to talk to me while making a blatant perplexed expression.

Miyabi was beside her and Tora and Tatsu sitting in front of us turned around to look at me.

Even for Julie who normally doesn't move her expression much, she was bringing her eyebrows closer.

"Let's talk in the corridor. Someone might hear us here."

After saying that, I urged everyone to head out to the corridor. The damages caused from the <<New blade battle(Newcomer battle)>> was completely restored during the GW, and there was nearly no one in the corridor with its original aspects restored regardless of it being break time, the class--------rather than saying that, this showed the fact that there are only a few people inside the school including the staff members.

We moved to a place which was quite separated from the classroom just in case.

At that moment, Miyabi was the first one to open her mouth to break the somewhat heavy atmosphere.

"E-eerr…….Tsukimi-sensei was trying to kill Julie-chan and Tooru-kun right?"

"Ja---. If not for Tooru, by now I would be……."

"I could not do anything if I was alone. That plan succeeded because Julie was there."

I seriously thought that without being humble. Thanks to Julie stopping Tsukimi's sword, a chance to slam Thunder god's(Mjolnir) strike in was produced.

[Nai. It was Tooru…….] [Nono, it was Julie…….]

"Stop it already. We should be talking about why that woman was once again in front of us first!"

Unable to hide his irritation, Tora made an angry shout and we returned back to the main thread.

“Even if you say that……even I would like to hear why Tsukimi appeared with a nonchalant face.”

The academy was left to deal with Tsukimi but, at the very least we thought we would never see her ever again.

“Kuhah, then let me tell you, <<Irregular>>.”

“------Uh!?”

The voice of the subjected person suddenly mixed into the conversation.

At the same time with being shocked at that voice------our sights gathered towards the window.

As if to respond to our sights, when we thought we heard the laugh from her true self echoed, Tsukimi showed her face at the opposite side of the window. Why was she in the opposite side.

“Oora, Open the window. I can’t get in like this. Hurry up and open the damn window if you want your questions to be answered.”

You shouldn't eavesdrop first if you want to ask someone to do something. I opened the window, while thinking I shouldn’t be doing this.

Naturally, while being cautious……is what I planned to do.

"Arayooto."

Tsukimi treated the window frame like iron bars and after making a turn in midair, she broke into the school with her legs first.

What's more, this was done at the same time when opening the window, and from my point of view, the petticoat that suddenly appeared in front of my eyes looked like a large white flower blooming.

"Buu!?"

……Incidentally, the thin white cloth Tsukimi was wearing on her lower half was pushed at my face.

(Wait…….this is……..!?)

After being stumbled upon with bewilderment and an impact towards my head, my head was put between her soft thighs and my upper body was pulled forward.

*Zuun……..*! A strong impact was directed towards my back together with a dull sound.

"Gah……! Kahah……."

[Tooru!!] [Tooru-kun!!] [Tooru!!]

"Ko-Kokonoe! Tsukimi-sensei what are you doing!?"

Although Tachibana raised an angry shout from the sudden Franken Steiner, Tsukimi easily washed it off indifferently.

"Kuhahah. A Pain fall awaits after a good experience Service. This is the rule of the world."

Tsukimi erected her index finger and *Chi*chi* swung it left and right.

"Kuh, what rule is that……..ouch……."

"Are you okay, Tooru?"

She had a provocative smile----------Tsukimi was standing still while showing her true self while Tachibana, Tora and Tatsu were confronting her.

The only one not revealing any enemy intent was Miyabi, since she was not used to fighting, she was only looking at my face and Tsukimi's alternately while being flustered.

The strained atmosphere continued for a full 10 seconds------

The first one to move was Tsukimi.

We were about to manifest our <<Blaze>> in reflex but, it was not needed.

It's true that Tsukimi moved but, she only raised both her hands up with no intent to fight.

"…….What are you planning."

"Just like what you see, I have no intentions to fight. If I were to fight with you guys here then, I would get fired in just one day after obtaining my hard earned reemployment."

Tsukimi answered while wearing a nonchalant smile from Tora's question.

"What do you mean by reemployment……..?"

"It probably means, her employer has switched to the academy."

"Kuhah. As expected from an honors student, your head processing is different from that blockheaded dairy cow."

"Co-cow!?"

Miyabi used her hands and tried to cover her chest from Tsukimi's words……however, she could not hide it since it was too big.

"Well, that is the case. Me continuing to be a teacher like this is more than enough proof."

"……. It's hard to believe since it is abrupt but, it looks like the case judging by the situation."

"You can't do that you know, Kokonoe-kun You have to use honorifics properly towards Sensei ♥"

"……Don't ask for the impossible when you were someone that almost killed us."

"Kuhah, you didn't die so don't be so stiff with me."

"That's why you too, don't say something stiff like asking me to use honorifics."

"Uh! Seriously!! You got some nice sense there <<Irregular>>!! Kua---ahahahahaha!!"

For an instant, Tsukimi opened her eyes wide from my reply and started laughing by hugging her stomach while hitting her hips.

Soon, after her laughing calmed down, she leaned against the wall while making a happy expression.

"……Then a question from me. You said [job] at that time right? I'll have you answer the where, who and what kind of reason did they have to attack us."

Having received the worst injuries from Tsukimi, Tora could not hide his irritation and asked.

"There are a lot of people depressed about the <<Exceed>> in this world. Well, I can't say who it is because of confidentiality but, it's a country that holds justice."

"That means……."

We didn't even need to ask for the name of the country, we can get it from that sarcasm.

"Don't tell me……that isn't possible. Are you saying it came from a country……."

Tsukimi shrugged her shoulders as if to play a fool towards Tachibana who was unable to hide her shock.

"Kuhah, remember this. Darkness exists in every country. And it is the same with this Kouryou-------which means, this academy is the darkness of Japan. If not for that, although it is done in secrecy, there is no way they could succeed in using inhuman methods to produce nano-machine monsters."

I wonder could it be taken seriously.

But, it was persuasive.

It does sound convincing if I think about the fact that the existence of the <<Lucifer>> and <<Exceed>> has not come out to public because there is a country in the background.

"Well, it is up to you guys to **believe how much you want**. ……alright then, break time is about to end so see you all later. Don't be late for class." Tsukimi swung her hands and left after turning her back towards us.

"…….How much do you think we should believe that talk?"

"Fuun. Leaving aside the fact that a country is behind this, I think it should be true judging by the situation of her going to the academy side."

"I have the same opinion with Tora."

"Only, let's be cautious just in case."

Both of them agreed to my opinion.

(However, to think something like her attacks were related to the country, I don't know how much of that I could believe…….)

The time for lunch ended and has turned into the afternoon, and it has come to the physical ability enhancement training after a long time but------

"A 20 kilo baggage……"

With a smiling face, Tsukimi announced that the real training would start from today since the GW had finished.

But, the surroundings made a commotion when they heard the contents.

"Tooru-kun. What do you mean by baggage……..?"

Miyabi beside me asked me a question with a soft voice regarding the unfamiliar word.

The baggage is a knapsack and after I answered that we would probably be running with weights placed inside it, she showed an uneasy manner.

Miyabi had become used to running in long distance thanks to her continuously running voluntarily but even so it did not change her lack of confidence.

Because of that, it was probably natural for her reaction when she heard that the training will be harder compared from before. That's why--------

"Miyabi if it is you, it will be okay. You became able to run a marathon already right?"

"Th-that's true…..I'll do my best."

Although she could not hide her uneasiness, Miyabi nodded.

"……Bu-but, if I can't run as far as finish then…….will you come and pick me up again?"

"Pick you up……?"

Go and pick Miyabi up---------what I could recall back from that was the event that happened around a month ago.

The memories of me giving the unmovable Miyabi a piggyback and coming back.

(It was because of that day, Miyabi has started to talk to me……..)

"Will, you……?"

"Eh? Ah……."

Because my reply was not coming out, Miyabi asked me with upturned eyes as if to appeal to me.

"Aah, I understand. I will definitely go pick you up."

"Un, I will wait for you……."

And then, Miyabi nodded happily.

"---------Wait a sec, it's bad if you wait. You have to run to the finish."

"Ah……tha-that's right. ahaha……."

I made a wry smile following Miyabi.

At that moment, Julie brought over the baggage's in both of her hands respectively for Miyabi and me.

She then tilted her head when both of us were showing her a wry smile.

"Tooru, Miyabi. What happened?"

"A little something.……..Aah, thanks for the baggage."

The baggage I received transmitted the weight into my arms------although I say that, I don't feel the small number of 20 kilograms now that I am in my enhanced state.

I once again knew the amazingness of the <<Lucifer>> since the small bodied Julie could bring the baggage with a weight almost the same or even crossing her body weight when it was joined together with just some wobbling.

What's more, since this is said when we are still <<$^{\text{Level}}$I>>, I can't even imagine how much it would be at the end.

But even so, I have to continue running towards that end.

In order to understand the meaning of those words after obtaining <<Power>>.

Why did Otoha have to die, I was seeking that truth.

However that was------a deception.

**"They are dead, because they were weak."**

The dream showed its desire by saying that.

No matter how much gloss was on top of the surface, hatred and anger were swirling in my abyss.

There was a demon thirsting for revenge living there.

I realized that, each time the memories from that day, and that person's words resurface.

"Uaaaaaaaaaaaaahhh----------!!"

It was same today too. My roar filled with hatred has brought me back to the present from my dream.

"Haa……ah, haaa, haaa……..!"

"Tooru, are you okay……..?"

Julie came down from the upper level bed and directed her red eyes towards me worriedly.
Ruby eyes

"……Sorry."

"Nai. Please do not mind it."

It was already bright outside and morning has arrived.

Nonetheless, it was still somewhat faster compared to our waking up time but------

"Where are you going?"

After I washed my face in the washroom and changed into an attire that was easy to move in, Julie tilted her head while her face looked a little sleepy.

"I am going to sweat for around 30 minutes. I feel like moving my body a little."

After leaving an *I understand* from the nodding Julie, I left the room and headed towards the underground facility.

Although it was still morning, there were only a few people inside the training room which can be used from 6am to 10pm.

I exchanged a simple greeting with one classmate and headed deeper inside.

I was standing in front of a special sandbag which easily crosses 100 kilograms. It usually has urethane foam inside it but, the thing in front of me was specially made and was cramped with sand just like the name suggests.

I continuously punched and kicked that sandbag without resting.

My breathing became rough, and it became painful.

But even so, I would continue punching as long as I had power.

As if to drive away those words.

As if to slam all my hatred towards him.

I was only dead-set on that.

"You should stop around there."

I wonder how long I had been punching the sandbag.

By the time I stopped my fist when I was called out, I was dripping in sweat and my rough breathing was very painful.

"Just when I thought it was such a rare occurrence for you to train enthusiastically in the morning, how long are you planning to keep on hitting. If you keep that up, you will only injure your fist."

After I turned around, Tachibana made one sigh while her expression was frowning.

When I looked at the fist she pointed out, the skin was torn off and blood was oozing out.

"Ah……ouch……"

I started feeling pain on my fist and I distorted my face.

When I did that, Tachibana grabbed my hands while starting to walk.

"Let's go to the infirmary. It would probably heal immediately thanks to the <<Lucifer>> but this is for just in case."

I completely understood the blessings of this strengthened healing power from that one battle with Tsukimi.

This level of wound would completely heal by tomorrow but, it was now throbbing painfully.

But this was okay.

I felt a bit better from moving my body in a daze.

It would be a cheap trade if I think like that.

While pulling my hands, although Tachibana brought me along to the infirmary beside the training room, the doctor could not be seen there since it was early.

"There is no one here at this time as expected. Even though I said that, even I can handle this level of treatment."

After making me sit on a chair, Tachibana took the gauze and wet it with water.

"Uh……!"

In the middle of the blood stains being wiped off with the wet gauze, I groaned from the stinging water.

"Sorry. I'll have you……withstand it, a bit……"

Both of us noticed this the moment Tachibana raised her face.

Our faces were close.

Either I or Tachibana was the first one to have our cheeks blush from this close distance.

We both averted our face almost at the same time, and time advanced silently just like that.

"Alright, then. Next up would be wrapping a cling film before bandaging."

Different from the gauze application on the wounds we learned in class before GW, this was the moist wound healing method covered with a vulnerary covering material.

Many people get injured because Kouryou academy was a special technique training school, but thanks to the <<Lucifer>> increasing the healing abilities, there were many cases where it would end with just emergency treatment just like this.

Tachibana wrapped the cling film on my hand in a familiar manner before wrapping it with a bandage.

"I thought about this during class too but, Tachibana is quite good at this kind of stuff."

"There are always fresh wounds in the Tachibana dojo. I was always treating someone's injuries almost every day before enrolling here."

"No wonder……then, I think it won't be a problem to ask Tachibana to treat my injuries when I get them."

"Before that, you should pay attention to not get injured."

"Seriously."

Tachibana frowned her face towards me who was making a wry smile.

"…….More importantly, Kokonoe, what happened? Rather than calling you enthusiastic just now…….err, you had a somewhat bloodcurdling atmosphere around you……."

"Hnn…….last time, I remembered back about that time I lost to a person that was my friend. Thanks to that and by the time I noticed myself being filled with frustration, well."

I did not lie. I only said one part of the truth but, that was enough to trick her.

"……Fumu. That must be one terrible loss. However, I know it might be frustrating but even so, you should take care of your own body a little more."

After I nodded at Tachibana who was making a wry smile, this time it was my turn to ask questions with the intention of changing the topic.

"By the way, you said it was a rare occurrence seeing me just now. Which means, Tachibana often comes to training in the morning?"

"Almost every day, I would be in the training room around this time."

And after that ended, she would go around to other people's rooms to wake them up.

She's amazing, after honestly stating my opinion, I swung my head left and right.

"That's because Miyabi is always working hard every morning. I can't lose too as her <<Duo>>."

"Every morning?"

"Every day, she will run in the morning and after class……though I say this, she only started running in the morning after the <<New blade battle>> (Newcomer battle) though."

While muttering that, I thought Miyabi was working hard too.

At present, she was able to finish the baggage attachment marathon which started a few days too without retiring, the reason for that was probably because the results of her steady endeavor has born fruit.

"We can no longer remain careless anymore."

Tachibana made a happy smile to her <<Duo>> who has changed very differently from the first day of enrollment.

"Well then, I should be heading back to my room now. Tachibana, thanks for the treatment."

"What, it wasn't much. I think it's better to replace the wrap a few more times so, feel free to tell me when you want it."

It's true that it would finish quick and would look nicer compared to me doing it.

"The problem is taking notes will be a little tough with my hand like this."

"Fufu, then I will lend you my notes later."

"Is it okay?"

"But, the condition is you take the class properly."

"I understand……..however, it looks troublesome to go to the toilet with this hand."

"Fufu, feel free to tell me when that happens. I will help-------"

She then stopped her words mid-way. Tachibana noticed what she was about to say and in a blink of an eye her cheeks-------no, her whole face turned red.

"Wha-wha, what kind of obscene thing are you saying----------!?"

"Wait, I didn't say anything!?"

*zazan*……..*zazan*……..the wave was hitting nonstop.

“Fuwaaa……..”

In the morning of the next day, after hearing the faint sound of the waves in front of the school gate, a yawn unintentionally came out.

At that moment, I could hear the sound of light footsteps coming from afar.

The owner of those footsteps came closer, and I called out around the time I could see her.

“Yoo, Miyabi.”

“To-Tooru-kun!? ……..dre-dream? Un-until I could dream about him, towards Tooru-kun I……”

“No, I am not a dream but the real one.”

I lightly tapped Miyabi’s shoulders while she was bewildered.

“Real one……eh? Eeeeeeeeeeeeeh!? --------uh!! Fo-forget that from just now! Please pretend you didn’t hear that!!”

Miyabi’s expression quickly changed.

She was probably very embarrassed about misunderstanding this as a dream, and it felt heartwarming seeing her swing both her hands quickly.

(Pretend I didn't hear that huh, I wonder how I am supposed do that…….)

Miyabi regained her calm after a while and asked a question.

"E-erm…….why is Tooru-kun here?"

It's only normal to think like that.

That's because I was waiting in front of the school gate, with the time just passed 6 am in the morning.

"I heard from Tachibana that Miyabi was running not only after school but in the morning too. So I thought, I should join in too."

"Eh……? To-Tooru-kun too…….!?"

"Aah. I'll quit if it is an annoyance."

"Th-there is no such thing. You aren't an annoyance at all, Un."

*Buun*Buun* Miyabi swung her head left and right.

I thought it was about to be torn off since it was done so vigorously.

"Alright, let's start running immediately. It's a waste just nonchalantly being carefree like this."

"U-un."

Just like that, the conversation concluded and we started running side by side.

The running pace was not that fast, and there was leisure to have a conversation.

The topic that came out was-------

"……..E-errr, Tooru-kun. Sorry about that time."

It was about that time when she witnessed me hugging a fully nude Julie In the middle of GW.

Due to the much unexpected scenery (Me too) raising a panic, Miyabi used the <<Chivalry Lance lance>> and opened a big hole on the floor in my room (#Already repaired), this event was still fresh in my memories.

"Don't worry about it anymore. I wonder how many times you apologized for that."

After that day and even today too; each time our faces meet or do not meet, Miyabi has lowered her head countless times and it was more than enough to tell she was self-reflecting on her act.

"B-but……."

"No buts. I can't remain calm when I get apologized to all the time, and more importantly it is only natural to misunderstand that situation."

"……It's a misunderstanding right?"

"Eh?"

"Li-like I said, you aren't in that type of relationship with Julie-chan……..t-to do those type of things right?"

Towards that question she asked while her cheeks blushing, I also blushed while swinging my head and replying it's wrong.

"Tha-thank god ……"

Miyabi muttered, and I made a relieved sigh since it ended without the misunderstanding becoming something big.

After a while, the laps started to take its toll and Miyabi lost her leisure to exchange words with me.

"To-Tooru-kun……..it's okay to go…….. ahead ……."

"I understand. Then I'll be going on ahead."

By the time we reached the last lap, I nodded at Miyabi's words while she was out of breath, and both of us started running at full strength. Although we were running side by side until now, as expected Miyabi's figure was washed away in one go since we originally have a difference in stamina.

"Good work, Miyabi. You've gotten faster."

"U-un……..thank, you, To-Tooru-kun……"

Miyabi finally reached the goal a few minutes after I reached the school gate.

She places her hands on her knees and repeatedly breathed heavily.

That was a normal aftermath scenery of the finish of someone running, but the unusual one was Miyabi's……..err, those.

They were swaying in a manner as if they were following gravity; it made one think as if melons were inserted inside her chest.

Each time Miyabi breathed and her shoulders would go up and down, *they* would jiggle and-------

(……..Wait, what the hell kind of eyes am I giving Miyabi when she did her best in running!?)

*Pan*!

A flashy sound was produced when I used both my hands to slap my cheeks.

"Tooru-kun……?"

"I-I was putting in motivation……"

"Again? Fufu, Tooru-kun sure gets motivated at weird times."

Miyabi remembered the past and made a smile even though her breathing was still in disarray.

I could only make a dry smile towards her-------

All of a sudden, a sound completely changed the atmosphere.

*Para*Para*Para*……the sound of the helicopter erased the never-ending sound produced by the waves.

The helicopter passed across us and headed towards the premises of the academy just like that--------not long later, it started descending around the staff building.

"What is happening this early in the morning?"

That question unintentionally came out from my mouth and since there is no way Miyabi could answer that question, she tilted her head.

The light from the morning sun reached the descending helicopter.

The sun reflected something and a golden-hair color shined.

For some reason, I could not release my eyes from that shine.

## Part 2

There was a shadow inside the school looking at the helicopter just like Tooru and the others.

In a room inside the staff building--------- deep inside the chairman's office there was a gorgeous chandelier, an extravagant red carpet, a table and furniture finely decorated nicely with ornaments, and also a bedroom with a bed canopy placed inside.

Naturally, the shadow looking at the helicopter outside from the room-------- belonged to the Kouryou board chairman, Tsukumo Sakuya.

"……..She's here."

Sakuya was already dressed up regardless of how early in the morning it was and was wearing her usual gothic dress.

After moving from the bedroom to the office, Mikuni her trusty confidant was already awaiting her, and Sakuya brought him along to the courtyard.

The helicopter had finished landing almost at the same time Sakuya and the rest came out to the courtyard.

The wind caused by the rotor, made Sakuya's elegant black hair and gothic dress sway-----

Yellow Topaz

A girl with blonde hair showed herself from the helicopter.

Sakuya made a charming smile towards the gold girl whose shine made one think of the sun.

"Welcome, to Kouryou Academy. <<Exception>>------Lilith Bristol."

# Chapter 2 『If I Borrow Your Words

## Part 1

"So you are the <<Irregular>>----Kokonoe Tooru."

The first words the *transfer student* put in her mouth was that.

Going back about a minute in time.

On the morning of the day the <<The Sublimation Ceremony>> would be commencing.

The HR started and right after Tsukimi introduced the transfer student------

Most of the classmates gasped……even Tora too.

Yellow Topaz Sapphire blue

A beautiful blonde hair foreign girl with blue gemstone eyes was the one who entered the classroom.

Not only her eyes and hair, her style consisted of places which should be coming out, came out, and places that should be tucked in, were tucked in; that charming style that would put foreign actresses to shame not only made the males, but also the females gasp too.

Adding on, she had an elegant and lovely charm drifting around her, and her red lips further emphasized that fact.

If the same foreign beauty Julie was a fantasy-like moon floating in the dark night then, the impression she gave would be the shining sun in the grand sky.

Such a girl was placing one hand on her hip while the other hand was on the table, and was in front staring right at me.

Thanks to her slouching forward a little bit, I was about to move my sights toward the two swaying bulges before the 2nd round of voice came flying over.

"……Hey, are you listening to me?"

"------Uh!! So-sorry. I am Kokonoe……."

"Okay. Kokonoe Tooru, I am interested in you. That's why you'll come along with me."

I heard the same thing just one month ago but, the speech this time had a soft tone of command to it.

The gold girl acted as if it is only natural for her will to be followed, and turned her heels around without hearing my answer and started walking.

"O-oi. Even if you tell me to come along, right now it's-------."

"…….Don't make me say it twice."

She stopped her legs and said that sentence once she turned around.

"Errr---. It's still in the middle of HR though……"

Tsukimi was the first one who opened her mouth in the re-silenced classroom.

"You will ***specially*** have it permitted right? Tsukimi-sensei."

"……Go ahead-----"

For an instant, although a vein popped up on her forehead, Tsukimi permitted the transfer student's selfish actions.

(What does this mean? That Tsukimi isn't someone that would allow something like that……..)

"…….If you have a matter with Tooru then you can talk to him here."

Although Tora said that to her irritated-----

"Isn't it okay since it's something unrelated to you. I just want to have a talk in a place without any noise."

She flat out replied back.

Normally, his anger would burst out but, he was probably overpowered by her one sentence and glare. Tora stopped with a soft groan.

"Well. I'll be heading out a bit. It'll probably finish fast if it's just talking."

I made a small smile to Tora and stood up.

Tentatively, as long as Tsukimi the home-room teacher has given her permission, there was no reason to refuse unreasonably.

I exited the classroom together with the gold girl.

The place we reached was the garden located between the school building and the dormitory.

Since it was the season when flowers and greens would prosper , the garden was covered entirely with multicolored roses.

Inside the choking scent of roses------I am bad with it------she unhesitatingly advanced through on the path of small stone pavements.

Further up ahead, there was a gazebo there and a female butler standing-by inside it.

The butler respectfully lowered her head to us--------rather than saying that, it was for the gold girl.

In the middle of the gazebo, there was a table with a white cloth with beautiful embroidery and a tea set was placed on top of it.

"……Don't tell me we are going to have a tea party?"

"Yes, that's right."

She said it as if she didn't have to tell me about it and made a smile before sitting down and folding her long legs.

Although I have something I wanted to say and hear, I imitated her and sat down on the opposite side.

Once I sat down, the female butler poured the cup with milk tea .

"Thank you."

"……."

Even though I said my thanks, I was glared at for some reason.

(Why is that…….?)

Although I was feeling perplexed inside my mind, the gold girl sitting on the opposite side did not bother about the butler's manners and took a sip of the milk tea before making a satisfied smile.

"Well then, my business is-----"

"Nono, please tell me your name before your business. It looks like you know about me but, I know absolutely nothing about you. "

I hurried and stopped the girl when she was going to start her one-sided business talk.

"Now that I think about it, I haven't named myself yet. I am Lilith=Bristol. A student from a UK school."

UK school------

The official name is St. Foren academy. I was told it was a sibling school founded by the Dawn organization similar to Kouryou academy.

It is the only school outside of Japan that can nurture <<Exceed >>'s, and just like Kouryou, graduated students will be affiliated to the vigilante forces of the organization. Since they would be dispatched overseas, after affiliation to the force, we would be meeting up with people from the UK school eventually……..

"I see, a UK school's……"

"Yes……..though I said that, I will be a student in Kouryou from today onwards."

Lilith winked and smiled.

The moment I saw that smiling face, it was the first time I felt she was a girl my age.

"Nice to meet you, Lilith. Incidentally, it would make me happy if you could tell me the reason why you know me."

She knows about my name, face, and also the <<Irregular>>.

And for the reason------

"I heard of rumors of the <<Irregular>> in the UK school. I had them ***specially*** get the student documents and got your face and a name once I got here."

"I see……."

Even though I nodded, I thought what happened to the protection of personal information in Kouryou academy.

(As expected it would be problematic if a student is able to browse through……..)

"……..Hn?"

I unintentionally raised my voice when I tasted the milk tea while I was in my thoughts.

"Th-this is very good……."

"Fufu, it's superb right."

I nodded at Lilith's happy words.

It is clearly different from the milk tea I drank before until now.

It is this cupful of milk tea that greatly changed my impression of it because of the light aromatic smell going through my throat, and the exquisiteness of the moderate sweetness.

"Hn……it was tasty, Sara."

"……Much obliged, Ojou-sama."

The gold girl-----Lilith placed down with composed movements and the butler that has been silent until now opened her mouth for the first time.

(Ojou-sama, huh……)

I already guessed it since she brought a personal butler here but , she was probably from a rich family.

But, I'll just ask about that later after things ended.

Maybe she grasped my thoughts, Lilith slightly nodded-----

"Well then, the main topic."

She pointed her finger at me and fluently said out words that my ears doubted.

"Kokonoe Tooru. From today onwards you are my <<Duo>>."

"……Huh?"

I wonder if there is any other response other than astonishment, when someone who I barely met for even one hour suddenly says that I am her partner?

"Wha-what did you say just now……"

"Don't make me say it twice."

"You won't say……..no, errrr……..me becoming your << Duo>>……..?"

"It's not you but Lilith."

"Ah, sorry…….wait, nononono wait a second. I have a << Duo>> already so, I would be troubled if you suddenly tell me that, and isn't it school rules that a group that has already been established will remain like that until graduation in the first place. "

"Doesn't matter. That's because I am an <<Exception>>."

"<<Exception>>……..?"

I pondered the word I was not familiar with.

"……But even so, I am troubled that you didn't attend classes on the first day itself, Lilith=Bristol."

When I turned over to the voice that suddenly mixed into our conversation, a girl wearing a gothic dress was standing in front of a background with white roses.

"Pleasant meeting you. Chairman Tsukumo. This is a nice place. It's an ideal place for tea time."

"Those words make me happy, Lilith. But, now isn't tea time but class time."

"I'll be ***specially*** pardoned from that."

Towards the threatening chairman, Lilith replied by pointing her fingers at me.

"I don't care about the classes since I flew all over from UK **just to meet him** in the first place. More importantly, how about you join us chairman?"

"……..I'll accept that."

After the chairman made a soft sigh, she sat on the chair.

The butler was in the middle of brewing a new set of milk tea, and I asked about the things I was pondering about from the words Lilith brought out just now.

"Hey Lilith. Judging from the way you said it just now, don't tell me you transferred here to make me your <<Duo>>? Why are you going so far to make me……..?"

"**You and I are the same** a <<One and only(Unrivaled)>>. That is why I have cordially come to pick you up because you are someone fitting to be my <<Duo>>. Be thankful, Kokonoe Tooru."

"……No, even if you tell me to be thankful, I have been telling you from just now that I have a <<Duo>> already. And the school rules too ------" "You don't have to tell me twice, I already know that."

Lilith interrupted my words and swung her hands.

"But, Kokonoe Tooru. What you are saying is something **general**."

I tried recalling back the things Tsukimi taught previously.

(……..Now that I think about it, she said unless there is a good reason.)

"Which means it is okay for you team up again with a new << Duo>> if you are **out of the rule restrictions**. For example, when there is a big difference in <<Level>> with the partner or that person has dropped out from school……."

Lilith placed her fingers on her mouth and made a smile.

"And I---------the <<Exception>> am not bound by the rule restrictions."

"……I don't know what is <<Exception>>. But, do you think you will be forgiven if you say such selfish things?"

"It can be forgiven.……Right, chairman?"

Lilith directed her sights towards the chairman who held the highest authority within Kouryou academy.

But, the Gothic girl silently drank the milk tea.

Not long later, after emptying her cup, the chairman finally destroyed the silence.

"…….Kokonoe Tooru. If you wish for it, by the name of the chairman of Kouryou academy Tsukumo Sakuya, I will ***specially*** permit you to cancel your current <<Duo>>."

"Wha…….!?"

"See."

Contrastive to my shock, Lilith made a satisfied smile and said that.

"……What will you do?"

"……."

Right now should I cancel my <<Duo>>-----Julie or not.

"I don't even need to think about it."

"It's decided then."

I move my sights from the chairman to Lilith and clearly told her my intentions.

"Aah. It's decided. I don't wish to team up with Lilith so, I won't cancel my current <<Duo>>. That's my answer."

"Wha……..!?"

Lilith was stunned with an expression filled with shock.

Opposite to that, the chairman made a quiet smile and nodded.

"I have clearly heard your intentions."

"Well then, I should be heading back to the classroom. Pardon me, chairman."

I made a light bow, and stood up.

"……..See you, Lilith."

"-----Uh!! Wai-wait a second, Kokonoe Tooru!! Do you understand what you are saying right now!?"

"Aah, I understand. The answer is No. I will not team up with Lilith. If I were to borrow your words then, don't make me say it twice."

I turned my back to the speechless Lilith and returned back to the classroom in a fast pace.

"Zeeehaa". I heard my breathing I was probably making from, far away.

Naturally it was impossible. I just felt that because the fatigue was quite something.

(Fin-finally the goal huh……)

Since I saw the school gate from far away, I squeezed out my remaining power.

As a punishment for sabotaging HR and class, I was forced to run.

That's because Tsukimi said, "The only one special is only that Ojou-sama."

Although I felt it was unreasonable, I accepted the penal regulations but, the difficulty was beyond my imagination.

"Go-goal……..."

Inside the ringing echoes of the clock tower signifying lunch time, I reached in front of the school gate and sprawled on the ground with my limbs spread out.

(It's been a long time since I ran until I lost all my stamina…… ……)

I repeatedly breathed heavily and my chest moved up and down.

The salty scented wind riding on the wind felt good on my hot body.

After I was dead tired for a while, the sun was suddenly blocked making a shade.

"Good work, Tooru."

When I slightly opened my eyes, the silver girl making the shade was there making a small smile.

"Please take this."

"Aah. Thanks……."

I then raised my body, received the bottle and moisten my throat. This is exactly what the feeling of coming back to life is.

"*Kusu* it's rare to see Tooru-kun exhausted……"

"That was a disaster huh, Kokonoe."

It seems they came over to see my condition with Julie.

Miyabi was giggling while Tachibana was making a wry smile.

"Haa……I went through something nasty."

"Fuun. That's because you nonchalantly followed after that girl."

Leaning against the wall, Tora snorted wildly and said that. Tatsu was in the middle of muscle training behind him.

"……I am unexpectedly someone popular."

"Reflect a little on yourself, you idiot!"

"Well well, calm down Tora. More importantly Kokonoe, what matter did she have with you?"

While entering between me and Tora, Tachibana asked about the event in the morning.

"Ah----……"

My words were clogged when I was about to reply, and I remembered the conversation I had with Lilith.

**“From today onwards you are my <<Duo>>.”**

She thought her intentions being followed as something natural; I thought that she was a selfish fictional Ojou-sama that had become reality.

I then never met up with Lilith after that.

In the end, she did not appear in the class during the first period and after second period I was made to run the whole time.

“------Tooru?”

Julie tilted her head from seeing me being silent.

No, Julie wasn’t the only one. Everyone’s sights were concentrated on me.

“She-----you didn’t hear anything from Lilith?”

“Because she did not come back to class, I think the problem lies there before even asking her.”

“I see……errrr, Even though Lilith enrolled here from St Foren academy. It seems the topic of an <<Irregular>> was told there too so, she came over to ask regarding about that.”

“Fuun. Is that really all?”

She’s sharp.

“Aah, that’s all.”

I made a pretentious face towards Tora who asked another question and did not say anything about the offer to be her <<Duo >>.

It's because I don't want to make Julie worry.

"More importantly, let's hurry and go grab some food. I am so hungry that I am going to die. It's going to be the <<Sublimation ceremony>> after I recover by eating meat to my heart's content."

Hearing my comment, everyone laughed except for Tora who made a given up sigh.

However---

"Not only meat, you have to eat vegetables too, Kokonoe."

After laughing, Tachibana made a firm comeback…….

The <<$^{\text{Level 2}}_{\text{II}}$>> sublimation, is a little different from the one we went through during the enrollment ceremony.

We had new <<Lucifer>> administered into our body using a jet injector on the nape of our neck-------until there was still the same but, the difference occurred after that.

Right after administration during the enrollment ceremony, the <<Astar>> floated up and a heat that I thought was going to burn me to death attacked my whole body but, none of that happened this time. It's true that my body felt a little hot but, it was just in the level of a little hot.

"Fuu……..thank god I could successfully <<Level up
Rank sublimation>>……."

Around the time we finished the administration and exited the staff building, Miyabi made a big sigh and stroke down her chest.

"It's because the results of your training is coming up."

When I directed a smile at her after hitting that small back of hers, Miyabi became shy.

The sublimation can't be done if the mental state and physical state do not match up with the <<Level>>.

Because she heard that, Miyabi became especially happy.

Miyabi knew clearly about the fact that she was the most inferior in terms of stamina inside the lineup of people that received the special sublimation.

Miyabi's <<Duo>> Tachibana showed her happiness in her success for the <<Rank Level up sublimation>>.

"Fufu, with this everyone here has quickly accomplished the condition to rise to 2nd year. It's a nice thing to be able to continue socializing with this lineup for the next while."

(Now that I think back, the people who don't raise their << Level>> will be dealt with expulsion……)

"……..Fuun. There is still that possibility of dropping out of school if that someone is unable to follow the training."

"Uuu……."

Miyabi groaned from Tora's sentence.

(Seriously, this guy says too much……)

Although I made a sigh in my heart, I raised a lively voice and hit Miyabi's back once again.

"It's going to be okay. If things get tough, I'll pull you along even if I need to tie you up with a rope."

"To-Tooru-kun…….."

"Fufu, Kokonoe isn't the only one, I will do that too. As Miyabi' s <<Duo>>, I vow I will not let you meet up with a bitter experience like dropping out from school."

"Miyabi. I will help too."

After opening her eyes wide from our words, Miyabi said [ Thank you] and smiled.

“Tora. You have to help her when the time comes, for the portion of unease you caused to Miyabi. You’re a comrade too.”

“Uu……Fu-fuun. I have no choice then, I’ll lend my hand when that time comes……but there is one thing I need to say, I am not your comrade but rival, Tooru.”

After I replied by saying "I get it, I get it" to Tora who was pointing his finger at me------

“Well, if Kokonoe doesn’t work hard on your general subjects, rather than pulling Miyabi your status will be overturned so you better be careful.”

A hurtful comment to the ears came from Tachibana.

“Uguh…….! Even Tachibana’s English is the same as me!”

“E-everyone has a subject they are bad with!!”

Tora made a grand sigh when we were having such a pitiful quarrel.

“<< Level 2 II >> huh……it somehow does not feel real at all huh, Julie-chan.”

“Ja----. That’s true. If our appearance changed then it would be easier though……..”

(It somehow does not feel real at all, huh…….)

I recalled back the similar conversation I had with the ponytail girl last time and felt nostalgic.

(Even though one month has not passed yet……..I wonder if Imari is doing well.)

But------

I didn't have time to sink into sentimentally.

"Kuhah. If that's the case then----want to try it out?"

"-------!!"

A voice suddenly mixed inside the conversation.

In an instant, I looked back at the staff building when I was pulled by my heart and placed my hand on the <<Astar>> on my chest at the same time.

"Tsukimi……!!"

"Add sensei, <<Irregular>>."

The rabbit ear headband was swaying in front of my sights.

She was leaning on the wall with her back, and was making an unpleasant smile.

"Yooto……well, leaving that aside, manifestation of the << Blaze>> without permission is against school rules."

Tsukimi came closer while being directed with painful sights coming from everyone in the spot.

"……What do you want?"

"Since you all said it doesn't feel real so, I am saying do you want to confirm it or not."

There was only one imagination that comes to mind from those words-----it was to fight.

"Tsukimi-sensei. I know about how strong you are. But even so, are you saying that you will cause an uproar by having these numbers of people as your opponents?"

"Kuhahah. Didn't I tell you I don't want to be fired after reemployment, honor student."

Tsukimi passed by us and in a defenseless state------even though we can't lower our guard------exposed her back towards us .

"Well, forget about that and follow me."

After turning around and saying that, Tsukimi once again faced her back to us and walked away.

As for us, we could not read Tsukimi's intentions and followed her while being cautious.

"This is……..."

The place we were brought to was the outside training room.

Our shoes were covered with sand and the facility closely resembled a coliseum with all the mortar seats surrounding the area.

We were led to a place that had yet to be used in classes and was off-limits during the <<New blade battle>>, it was a facility (Newcomer battle) that we had only stepped into once during the facility tour right after enrolling into the school.

"……..So, what do you want us to confirm here?"

"Will you all stop with those scary faces already. Even though I told you all I have no plans on hurting you all already, what a troublesome bunch……..."

While we were thinking where this is and not releasing our cautiousness, Tsukimi started calling someone in a carefree manner.

"Heya, it's me. Aah, right now in the training room. ……Yes, the outside one. Aah, that's because **I will be letting them use it**. Hn, then I'll be switching with the <<Irregular>>."

She suddenly threw the phone she was holding and I caught it in panic.

(It means I have to talk to the person on the phone right……?)

And when I was about to speak the moment I touched it to my ear--------

**“Is this Kokonoe-kun? It’s me Mikuni.”**

“Mikuni-sensei……!?”

When I said out the name of the person I was talking with on the phone, everyone concentrated their sights on me. “I have heard it from Tsukimi-sensei. You all might feel uneasy from the previous matter but, right now she will not hurt you all. If you feel uneasy then I will send some observers there……”

“……I understand. I’ll ask for it just in case.”

I hesitated for a bit but, I ended the call after calling some people here just in case.

“Looks like observers will be coming.”

“Kuhah. I have observers on me huh, I am not trusted at all huh …….”

Tsukimi said that after I gave a brief explanation.

“I am not that pure to honestly believe someone that almost killed me.”

“Fuun. More importantly, I would like to know the reason about why you have brought us to a place like this.”

"Because you all became <<Level 2 II>>, so with a service in mind, I am allowing all of you to confirm the extents of that enhancement. Of course, I have received permission for you all to use your <<Blaze>> so fight to your heart's content."

I see. That's why she said "I will be letting them use it" to Mikuni-sensei just now.

"I think I swallowed most of the idea but, don't tell me you are planning to take all of us alone?"

"Kuhah. I wanted to do that but I gave up. We don't know when we would be putting killing intent in the <<Blaze>>."

At the very least, I think our side wouldn't do that-------that's what I would like to think but, I feel uneasy about Tora and Tatsu though.

"…….That means, each of us will have to decide with which opponent to go against among ourselves."

She was still someone I couldn't trust but, now that there were observers being sent here, Tsukimi probably couldn't do anything strange.

More importantly, since there was permission to use the <<Blaze>>, there was no way we wouldn't be drawn to it.

"One team will be left out if we fight in <<Duo>>. Let's go with a one on one then."

[Tooru. Fight------] [Kokonoe. If it is okay with you, would you like a match?]

Almost at the same time. Tora was the one faster to a certain extent but I decided to accept Tachibana's challenge.

"Sorry Tora. I usually have practice matches with you normally. "

In the end, we went with match-ups which we usually don't go with and we decided to make Julie fight with Tora, and Miyabi with Tatsu.

The observers appeared at a good timing and we started the << Practice Blaze match>>.

Miyabi and Tatsu were made to be the ones to go first and we took audience in the audience seats in order to not disrupt them.

(Rather than calling it a rare team up……is having Tatsu as the opponent really okay?)

She has a mental state of being bad with males and Tatsu's physical strength is the best in the class.

Miyabi said she would do her best so, Tatsu would probably hold back but, I could not wipe off the uneasiness.

But-------

“I-I am coming, Tatsu-kun! Teyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa--------!!”

“---------!!”

In an instant, I wasn’t the only one who gasped.

Holding the <<Chivalry Lance lance>> and kicking the ground, Miyabi closed in the gap between Tatsu with shocking speed.

It was not to the extent of blinding speed.

However, it was an unexpected speed from the Miyabi we knew until now.

It seemed the same case for Tatsu too-----

*Dozuu*!! The strong impact shook the training room.

His stomach was pierced through and he was skewered to the wall just like that.

If we had not known the specialty of the <<Blaze>>, it would be a shocking scenery where we would avert our eyes from……..

“Wawah, are you okay, Tatsu-ku~~~~~~~n!?”

Miyabi panicked. Staring at them from the audience seats, we were wrapped in shock.

“It is a surprise. It’s at the same speed as Tooru's.”

Although slightly, even Julie opened her eyes wider as she said her thoughts.

The factor that should be shocking wasn't her speed.

The power that brought Tatsu from the middle of the training room to the wall was also observed.

"To think this much change occurred with just one <<Level>> going up……."

I wonder how much it has occurred for me, if Miyabi has changed this much.

Those thoughts worked up my feelings and when I stood up to go down to the fighting area, my arm was grabbed.

"Tooru. Let us go first."

Maybe just like me or even more than me, Tora was making a high-spirited expression.

(Well, I did refuse Tora's challenge just now……..)

It's not like he would forgive me with this but I decided to pull back here.

After bringing the fainted Tatsu to the audience seats to sleep, the second battle started.

"Tora. I am going at full power."

"Bring it on."

Julie and Tora. I didn't need to say this but, Julie was the fastest amongst the first year. However, Julie's opponent Tora also has good speed coming after her.

Both of them have speed as their weapon. However, Julie attacks furiously even though her self-taught skills have refined parts, and because Tora has learned martial arts for many years so, his attacks have a distinctive characteristic of attacking in a pointed and accurate manner.

"They would be equal on <<Fist Practice>> but, things would be different when it comes to <<Blaze match>>. What is your insight, Kokonoe?"

"That's because this is the first time I've seen Tora using his <<Blaze>> to fight. But even so, I think it would be Julie. Julie is a different person when she is with her <<Twin blades>>. Even for myself, if I am asked whether or not I can win against her in a serious battle, I think it would be hard to say."

However, the results will be unknown if I use Thunder god's strike.

Since it was impossible for me to direct it towards Julie, the assumption is out of question.

"I see. I have the same opinion as you since I fought Julie with her <<Twin blades>>------Oh, they moved!!"

Since we saw Miyabi's movements just now, I thought we wouldn't be that surprised.

But, we were astonished again at the speed of both of them the moment they moved at the same time.

Julie took the upper hand using a speed slightly exceeding Tora's.

Opposite to her cute appearance, the <<Saber>> she held with both hands was attacking wildly from left and right.

However, Tora blocked the blade with the <<Symbolic Katar short sword>> from the right and avoided the left blade by slightly twisting his body.

Julie did not stop and continued pursuit------ the instant I thought that, Tora dodged and continued thrusting. Even though the <<Symbolic Katar short sword>> scratched her clothes, it was far away from a decisive strike.

After countless exchanges, the sound of blades slicing the air and the sound of steel clashing continued echoing.

But, the fight dance did not continue forever and the time of conclusion had come.

Right after Julie reacted to the blade aiming to the side of her head by evading and bending her upper body, Tora's body spun like a spinning top and made a continuous side sweep.

If it was me, I would use my <<Shield>> to block it or perform a back step to make distance------

Whatever I picked, I would probably be in a defensive stance.

But Julie was different.

She reacted to Tora's attack in an instant and dodged the <<Symbolic short sword (Katar)>> by sinking her body as if she was crawling on the ground.

At this moment, this match was determined.

Julie swung the <<Twin blades (Double)>> at the same time while standing up.

Just like the fangs of a wolf, the 2 blades attacking from left and right, slashed Tora's stomach.

"Are you okay?"

"Fuun, this much isn't a problem…… I will win next time……!"

When I asked Tora who came back to the audience seat, he replied back with a hating to lose answer.

However, it looks like Tora could not hide the exhausted part of his <<Soul>> which had been slashed, and made a big sigh the moment he lowered his waist.

"Next off is Tooru's turn."

I called out to Julie, when I stood up and was about to go down towards the training area.

"Aah. Now that I have seen such a good match, I have to put up a good fight that won't lose to that…….and, more importantly Julie, take this……."

I took off my jacket and handed it to Julie by hanging it on top of her body.

"----------?"

That's because just now, the part scratched from the << Symbolic Katar short sword>>---------the part around her collarbone was cut, causing her skin to be exposed.

"It isn't cold now…….?"

Speaking of which, it would be hotter after a battle and Julie was tilting her head.

"……It isn't good for a girl to show off her skin."

It wasn't particularly an exposure that was bad, for a young man's education but, this is just in case.

"…….. Thank you very much."

From my explanation, Julie finally understood and her cheeks were slightly blushing pink in color.

"Please do your best, Tooru. I will do my best in my cheer too……..with this jacket part too."

Together with the last sentence, she grabbed the jacket slightly tighter around her hand and showed a small smile.

After I went down to the training area, Tachibana the one who I was going to confront was making a happy expression.

"It has been since the <<New blade battle>> that I had a match with you. But this time, I'll have you hand over the win."
Newcomer battle

"It was as a <<Duo>> that time so, it's not like I personally won …….that is why for this match, I don't plan on giving away the win."

"Fufu, bring it on!"

At the same time as the signal, Tachibana and I kicked the ground while aiming at each other.

"Here I come!!"

"-------!?"

Tachibana and I were also shocked.

After looking at the previous two battles-------the fight Julie and the rest had, I had already confirmed the enhancement of the physical abilities from the <<Rank sublimation>>.
Level up

However, because it was beyond my imaginations when I confirmed it actually with my own body, I became bewildered.

To think my step in would become this fast from sublimating to <<Level 2 II>>.

Inside the feeling of the almost weightless feeling of my body and yet not my body, I launched a thrust.

“Kuh……..I won’t let you do it so easily!!”

Regaining her composure instantaneously, Tachibana attempted to block my fist.

In regards of defense skills, there was no one in class that could come next to Tachibana.

Furthermore, it was also the same with switching from defense.

“Seii!!”

Tachibana blocked my fist with her palm and twisted her body-------

The energy of the thrust was used just like that, and I was thrown away.

But, in order to avoid being struck, I turned my body mid-air and landed facing over to Tachibana.

“Tou……..! Not bad, Tachibana! Your reflex speed also increased-------wait, Uoooh!?”

Right in the middle of my words, I noticed the metal drip approaching right in front of me, and I jumped to the side.

"That was dangerous……"

The speed of the metal drip could not even be compared to that time I saw it during the <<Newcomer battle>>.

"Fuu, not bad for avoiding that one. But, how about this one!?"

The battle between me and Tachibana turned into a much simpler battle compared to the previous two.

The focus point of this match is for me to pass through the <<Iron Chain>> and enter her chest area.

(……At times like this, I envy Julie and Tora who have light foot work!)

Evading the <<Iron Chain>> several times, and sometimes blocking with my <<Shield>>, I took the chance and closed in the distance.

"Over here……!!"

I prepared my fist after slipping past, but-----

"Naïve!!"

The foot I stepped in was tangled with the <<Iron Chain>>.

Tachibana then pulled the <<Iron Chain>> just like that, and my balance collapsed when my foot was pulled away.

Without losing that chance, Tachibana grabbed my collar and sleeves and performed a osotogari[2b 1], slamming my back towards the ground.

In a flash, Tachibana moved to the next attack but------

A problem occurred over here.

Tachibana then performed a scarf hold.

Explaining in an easier way on why that is a problem, **Tachibana's breast was being pushed at my face**.

"~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~!?"

*Funyan**funyan**funyan**funyan**funyan**funyan*.

Those soft lumps pressed on my face bounced. It kept bouncing.

Even though I struggled desperately in half panic, Tachibana did not let me go and pressed her breast even more.

"Tsukimi-sensei. This is different from a defeat but, since I completely sealed his movement, is it okay to say this is my win in this case?"

"Kuhaha. Why not? An oppai[2b 2] press feels like close to heaven too in a different kind of way."

"Eh……..? O-Oppai……Eh?"

Tachibana stopped……while pressing her breast towards my face.

"Kokonoe!? Wha-what did she meant by close to heaven! Did you wish for this match with those shameless thoughts!? Yo-Yo-Yo ……You foooollllll!!"

Tachibana then *Pyon* hopped up and separated from me, and ran away with a completely red face.

"It's a misunderstanding----------!!"

Although I shouted towards the back that was getting smaller----

[To-Tooru-kun you pervert…….][……You damn lecher][ So Tooru was perverted……]

"Like I said, it is a misunderstanding----------!!"

The three of them from the side shown perplexity, resignation and, a surprised reaction respectively. The rabbit ears was hugging her stomach while making an unbearable laugh.

(I became stronger right……?)

I thought that when, I recalled back to the match that happened in the afternoon in a daze.

*Pyuuu* the sound of the wind was produced when I swung my fist.

(It's true I became stronger but----------)

Being strong isn't my only goal.

I want a strength that can pierce through that person with my fangs.

(It's still not enough……)

There was nothing to measure the difference between me and that person but, I can tell from feeling.

The current me------no, it's better to say that I am not even close to him.

After a while, Julie with flushed white (Snow white) skin after a bath, returned back to the room.

"Tooru. There is something I want to request for tomorrow."

"What is the request?"

"It's tomorrow but, is it okay for you to accompany me?"

"I don't mind, is there something going on?"

"Ja---. It's Sunday too so I want to go and buy outside clothing. It has been hot recently and I only have thick clothes……."

It is still May so I don't think it's that hot but, it seems the heat can already be said to be summer to Julie who was brought up in a cold country.

"I get it, I'll accompany you. But, where are we going?"

"I have not decided yet. I was thinking of going to a good shop nearby. If there is one."

"I see. Well, we can probably find clothes if we search in a station building."

"Ja----. But, I think walking without a plan is a problem so, I'll go ask Miyabi and the rest."

"Aah, that's true-------and, wait! Are you planning to go like that…….!?"

Hearing my question, Julie made a puzzled expression.

It was the usual style of her in her dress shirt form freely exposing her slender white legs.

Julie didn't notice how dangerous that form could be on a floor lined up with male rooms.

As expected, there isn't anyone that would attack her but---------

Before even that, it's true that I felt somewhat unwilling to let them see Julie like this.

"I-I will ask. Julie……you prepare the apple tea."

"Ja---. I understand."

I stood up and left the room before hearing a reply.

(What the hell am I thinking……)

While making a sigh, I walked in the corridor with less people in it.

I am not sure why I have those kind of feelings.

Is it because I don't want the surroundings to misunderstand after someone sees Julie like that?

It's true that there is that but, I feel there is something wrong.

(……Something like, not wanting to expose my daughter to the eyes of inquisitiveness?)

I might have received the influence from Julie looking at me as a father figure.

It felt fitting when I thought that and I made a wry smile while ascending up the stairs.

I reached the floor lined up with the girls rooms and, abruptly met up with Tachibana(Who has finished kneeling on the ground during the day).

“Ko-Kokonoe!?”

“Ooh, nice timing. Hey Tachibana, actually-------”

However, I could not end the last part of my sentence.

“I-I am really sorry about what happened in the afternoon! Al-alright, I will be off then……!!”

Maybe she remembered the scarf hold in the afternoon, her face turned red in a flash and she descended down the stairs.

Her attitude was like that right now, and she didn’t show up during dinner time too so, it seemed she was quite bothered about the matter in the afternoon.

(I have no choice. I’ll go ask Miyabi and quickly head back.)

Thanks to Tachibana making a squeaky voice before leaving, a few number of girls nearby directed their sights towards me wondering what happened.

While feeling embarrassed from the sights, I headed towards Miyabi’s room in a fast pace.

“Wha-what’s wrong, Tooru-kun……?”

Bringing her face out from the door after I knocked, Miyabi looked up at me in a little surprised manner.

"Aah actually, I want to go buy clothes, so I came to ask whether or not there is a good shop nearby."

"If that is the case, then I recommend the A La Mode shopping mall. Its nearby, and it's very big I think."

Together with the direction towards that shopping mall, Miyabi also recommended a gelato shop too.

"I see, thank you……ah, if you are free, Miyabi would you want to come with?"

"Fuee!?"

If it was buying clothes for Julie, a girl's opinion would be better than a guy's so I thought of inviting her but--------

"Aaah, errr, errr, my heart preparation…….!! A-a date so suddenly……..!?"

"--------!? Yo-you're mistaken! It's not a date! There is one more person coming!!"

"Eh?"

"Rather, I was planning to go buy Julie's clothing. Sorry for the confusing words."

"Ah……..I-I see. Ahahaha……I am also sorry, for making such a weird misunderstanding……..."

"No, it's because I said it in a way that caused you to misunderstand so, I am really sorry."

An unpleasant atmosphere flew by.

"So……what are you going to do? Would you want to come with us tomorrow?"

"Ah, errm……I have a promise with Tomoe-chan to go out with her tomorrow so……."

That's why with Tachibana too--------is what I thought but, I immediately reconsidered.

From the reaction I saw just now, Tachibana is clearly not the type that would completely forget about the matter once its tomorrow and come with us, it's probably better not to invite her unreasonably.

"It can't be helped then. Alright then, I should be heading back soon. Thanks, Miyabi."

"Ah, un……good night Tooru-kun."

After saying good bye to Miyabi who was nodding, I decided to head back to the lower floor.

"Together with Julie tomorrow huh……..."

## Part 2

"To-Tooru-kun and Julie-chan are going out together……..."

Miyabi closed the door and muttered.

She heard clearly that Julie was not Tooru's lover from his mouth.

More importantly, judging from the point of inviting three people to go out, Miyabi probably knew both of them didn't have that kind of relationship but----------

What will happen tomorrow?

Then after that?

For the both of them, who pass a lot of time together, there was no guarantee their relationship wouldn't change forever.

Much less, Miyabi normally thought Julie, who was the same sex as her, had a very cute appearance together with her personality.

That was why; there was no reason to be found for Tooru not to be attracted to the silver girl.

(I-it's Tooru-kun's freedom to go out with whoever he wants…….)

Even though she thought that, it was complex in her mind.

Miyabi was not self-aware of her own feelings towards Tooru.

It's true that she trusted him the most out of any of the opposite sex she met until now but, she had yet to reach to conclusion of the affection deep inside her.

But even so, unconsciously from under her self-awareness, she leaked out a big sigh.

(As expected, I wished I said okay……..to go together with them…….)

How long would it take Miyabi to be self-aware of the reason to make her think like that?

"What's wrong, Miyabi?"

Returning back to the room at that moment and seeing Miyabi standing there at the entrance, Tomoe asked strangely but, the reply that came back was a dry smile.

"By the way, where should we go tomorrow? If Miyabi doesn't have any wishes then I am thinking of Kasai aquarium-------"

"Ah……."

Towards Tomoe's question, a place floated inside Miyabi's mind.

"You have a place in mind?"

"Errrr, somewhere like A La Mode……..."

"A La Mode? Didn't we go there just last week? Is there something you forgot to buy?"

"Eh? E,errr, I heard To-Tooru-kun and Julie-chan were going together so, err……I-I was curious……."

Originally, it would be normal to trick her in a time like this but; Miyabi said the reason in extreme honesty.

"Kokonoe and Julie are……!?"

(Both of them together------which means……..a-a date?)

The scenery that immediately popped out inside Tomoe's head from those simple words, was the scenery of Tooru and a naked Julie hugging each other that happened a while back.

(Im-impossible right…….?)

The situation about Tooru and Julie was explained to her and she believed the talk in agreement.

However, the doubts she gained expanded in a blink of an eye.

"C-can we…….?"

The answer Tomoe gave from Miyabi's question was------

"I-I would have never thought both of them would…….. Thi-this is because they are in an illicit relationship. That is why----

-----I think it would be good to watch over them from the shadows, Umu.”

It was a tailing--------with a fake excuse as cover.

# Chapter 3 『That Is a Good Idea

## Part 1

After exiting the school gate and crossing the small bridge, the only connection to the outer world to the students attending Kouryou academy ---------was a monorail for authorized personal only.

In a distance that doesn't even take 5 minutes; the suspended type monorail was connected to a nearby JR station[2c 1] of Tokyo and Chiba from the front of the school.

When we boarded the railway car, there were only a small number of people riding inside.

Since school academy personnel were the only ones able to use it in the first place, it's only natural to say the number of users are few.

Thanks to that, we're grateful to find empty seats without fighting over them.

"This is somehow heart throbbing isn't it?"

Sitting in the opposite side of the box seat, Julie said while looking outside the window.

"I see. It's the first time you visited a Japanese city."

"Ja---. That is why I am looking forward to it."

Julie moved her viewpoint, from the sea outside the window----------, to me and nodded.

(It might be good to take a breather like this once in a while……….)

I took a side look at Julie, who returned to her sightseeing at the sea again, and *Fuu* leaked a smile.

Incidentally, Julie and I were in uniform even though it was Sunday.

It’s not like there is a school rule saying we have to wear the school uniform when going out of the school.

It’s simply just because Julie doesn't have any clothes to match the May weather, and I followed her.

(However, this placement relation sure feels nostalgic. Well, it’s probably because I've gotten too used to it.)

Normally, I would be with Julie side by side with our shoulders close to each other when we usually watch television--------and depending on the situation, we would be sitting side by side within a certain distance, I could feel the warmth from us almost touching each other.

It's also the same case when we attend classes and at the cafeteria.

That is why I feel strange sitting in front of her and would accidentally fix my stare at her.

This foreign beauty directing her red (Ruby eyes) eyes outside the window.

Her silver (Silver blonde) hair, which no one would turn away from and would stare at amazed, was beautifully swaying.

Because there's a lack of expression shown on her well-featured face, it makes one think of her as a delicate bisque doll.

But I know this normal girl has something aside from those truths.

---Inside that heart holds a dark emotion known as revenge.

The same darkness as me.

Maybe------That night was just a dream, I would think something like that.

However, I felt hesitant to put that matter in my mouth again.

That's because I didn't want to admit Julie held the same hatred as me and was someone that wished for revenge.

"-----Tooru?"

*Chirin* the echoing bell brought me back.

She has probably called out to me many times already. Julie was looking at me while tilting her head.

“We're going to arrive soon."

“Ah……I-I see.”

Before I knew it, almost as soon as we departed, the monorail was close to reaching its destination.

In the middle of slowly entering the platform, Julie got up from her seat.

“Julie, it’s better to stand up once we arrive.”

*Gakon*.

Almost at the same time as my warning, the monorail was close to stopping and was swaying.

“Ah……..”

My warning was useless and Julie’s balance collapsed, making her fall on her butt.

……On top of my lap.

Her hair swayed and a nice smell tickled my nasal cavity.

“Th-that’s why I told you.”

"Ja-Ja-----……."

After I said that while feeling a little embarrassed, Julie also hung her head downwards in embarrassment.

"I will be careful from now on. Alright then, let's get off."

After I stood up, I extended my hand to Julie.

Although I once extended out my hand to her in the clock tower last time, including this time, having her hand's weight on mine felt very embarrassing.

After getting out the station we transferred to the JR route, following what Miyabi taught me, and got off after one station.

From there, after walking for around 5 minutes, we reached our destination the A La Mode but------

The A La Mode was once the biggest shopping mall in Japan ( According to Miyabi's information), although that status has been taken by another place, the number of customers didn't decrease and was filled with many people during holidays.

"…….It's like a festival."

Although it can't be said to be wide, Julie opened her mouth in amazement and looked around.

"Tooru isn't really that shocked."

"That's because there was a big mall in my hometown. Well, let' s see the floor guide and confirm the location of the shop for now."

"Ja---……..."

I urged Julie, who was still a little blank at the moment, as I opened the guide map I took from a nearby help kiosk, I furrowed my eyebrows in bewilderment.

"What is this……..."

The guide map was oddly thick, as it spanned 8 pages even though it was just introducing the floors; with a total of more than 500 plus shop names written in it.

(I heard there were a lot of shops but, I didn't think it would be this many……)

"Tooru, is something wrong?"

While I was dumbfounded, Julie tip-toed while peeking at the guide map.

She then grabbed my sleeves to take balance and her peeking form made me think of her as a small animal.

"Ah, sorry. Let's look at this while sitting nearby."

After saying that, I sat on a nearby stool with Julie.

"This is…….I have no idea what's going on in this at all."

"A-aah……As expected, it's normal to think that."

She brought her body closer, defenselessly as usual, and stuck on my lap making me feel, in my mind, slightly excited.

However, Julie did not seem bothered by this at all and flipped the page but------

"It's too many, so I don't know where we should go……."

And like that, she made a troubled face.

The only information in the index were the shops name and position code. What's more, it's not like the places were positioned in the west, south, north hall respectively since it also expanded to the first and second floor; thanks to that, just like Julie said, we had no idea where we should go.

"U---n……. Let's walk around randomly for now. Since there are this many shops, I think we would find something of interest sooner or later."

I stood up and the moment I was about to start walking, I recalled something and turned back.

"Julie, please be careful not to get separated because of the crowd."

"Ja---"

*Koku**koku* Julie nodded and grabbed my sleeves tightly.

“I won’t get separated like this.”

Julie said that with satisfaction while making a small smile.

“Th-that’s true……”

It’s not like the level of holding hands, but this was embarrassing in its own way.

However, that feeling immediately disappeared somewhere once we started walking.

Inside, amongst the hustle and bustle, the many people we passed by looked at us and I could hear topics about Julie.

["Hey, isn’t that girl really beautiful?"] ["A celebrity?"] ["I’ll take a photo and upload it"] ["Oh, she has a guy……."] ["The Blondie just now was good too but, this is good in its own way……."]

There were a lot of reactions but, most of it regarding Julie.

But, while I meant most of it, it meant all of it wasn’t that.

["They are wearing school uniforms though; I wonder which school they are from?"] ["Don’t know? I never seen that before……."]

It’s only normal they didn’t know.

Unless there was a good reason, Kouryou students were not allowed to go out other than weekends.

And even if they were to go out on a weekend, there probably wasn't any commendable students that would go out wearing a school uniform.

Only the school name could be heard at best.

Even for myself, if I hadn't heard about the existence of the school beforehand then, not only would I have no idea about the internal conditions of the school, I wouldn't even know the school' s name in the first place.

(That's because it's a school with that kind of enrollment ceremony.)

Although it was a school lacking common sense when half of the number of students dropped out from the enrollment ceremony, it's also weird that this school was not known to the public.

Mikuni-sensei said that information regulations were imposed, but it would probably be just a rumor at most.

And when I was thinking things like that, my sleeve was *gui** gui* being pulled.

"Tooru, how about that shop?"

"Ah……. You're right, that's a cute shirt……..I guess?"

I was often brought by my sister------Otoha to buy things but, I have absolutely no idea about girl's clothing.

But, judging from the shop display, it's true that I felt it would suit Julie.

Like that, we tried entering this shop for now but-------

"I think this suits her. How about it, boyfriend-san?"

"Eh!? Ah……. No, no, no. I am not her boyfriend……!"

When we were looking around for clothes, a female shop attendant came over and said those lines; even though I hurried and denied it, she just giggled.

I probably made her think I was trying to trick her due to embarrassment.

A male and a female together, what's more even though we entered the shop and started looking at clothes, Julie was still grabbing my sleeves and it's true that it wouldn't be strange for her to misunderstand.

Rather, even if I am a 3rd person here, we definitely would be thought of as a couple.

"I will go try on these clothes now."

Julie left with those words taking several summer clothes, recommended by the shop attendant, before entering the changing room.

"Fufu, she's a very cute girlfriend!"

“Y-yeah……”

I gave up denying since anything I did would be useless and gave a nod mixed with a wry smile.

Checking on her status, I made a small sigh while making a side glance at the shop attendant who came over to see us with the purpose of sticking her nose into our business, and began regretting coming here with the two of us only.

(It would have been better if everyone was together……)

Miyabi was probably out playing with Tachibana somewhere.

Tora headed out somewhere so I couldn’t find him.

Tatsu was working hard in his muscle training.

……And while I was recalling that back, the curtain slightly opened and Julie suddenly brought her face out.

“Tooru. I have finished changing……..can you have a look?"

“I’ll say this just in case; don’t expect a good sense from me.”

“Ja---. It is okay.”

I don’t know what she meant by "it's okay" but Julie nodded and opened the curtain wider.

[Uoo…….][Oh my……..]

The shop attendant and I let out a shocked voice at the same time and Julie silently showed herself.

The clothes Julie tried on was a refreshing, basic, white one piece.

The sleeves were opened wide and the arranged white lace has emphasized the girlishness.

"What's wrong, Tooru?"

"A-aah……errr, I think it suits you very well……..."

"Thank you very much. I will buy this then."

"You decide too fast!!.....wait, isn't it at least better to try some of the others first before deciding?"

*Un**un*The shop attendant beside me nodded.

Rather than doing it for her job, her expression was saying to try more clothes on.

"I understand…….but I decided to buy this one."

After saying that, she closed the curtain once more and we waited a few more minutes.

"Tooru. What do you think about this?"

It's black this time, opposite to the one piece from just before. Looking at that figure, the attendant and I made an sound of admiration again.

The skirt was short and it has a lot of frills as its characteristic, thanks to it being black, it made Julie's silver hair attractive and it suited her very much.

"Err……I think it's nice. Extremely."

"Ja---. I think I will buy this too then."

Maybe she liked my response, Julie slightly narrowed her eyes and confined herself within the changing room a third time.

She then showed herself not long later, and the clothes this time again suited her.

"How about this?"

"It looks refreshing so why not?"

"Ja---, it is very soothing. Well, this too……"

She bought all 3 clothes she tried in the end.

"E-erm. If it's okay with you, will you try other clothes? For my eyes recuperation……..not that, I think it will suit miss customer and we have a lot of cute clothes too."

"Errr……..what will you do, Julie? Will you try it on?"

"Ja--. If Tooru says so."

……It was a mistake to go with this flow.

"…….Julie. Don't you think you are buying too much?"

While staring at the 12 clothing items, stacked up like a mountain on the counter, I made a comeback just in case.

Looking at the pile of clothes she tried on, as they started entering the list of purchases, I thought she bought too many as expected and if I did not tell her that it was about time we should head to another shop then I would have no idea what would have happened.

"Nai. I am only buying the clothes Tooru said were nice."

"N-no, it's true I said I liked them, but I think all of it is just a little……."

"But, this one looks very matching and this one is very nice, this one is cooling and-------"

Julie lined up my comments one by one without making any mistakes.

After saying everything until the last 12th clothes-----

"As expected, I will buy them all."

In the end, Julie announced herself as a very good miss customer.

Although the shop attendant opened her eyes wide when we said we wanted to buy 12 clothes (+3 pair of shoes), she made an even more shocked expression when we told her we would pay with a credit card.

She probably would have never thought students like us would pay with a card.

But the instant we handed the student card which also functions as a credit card, ["Aah, it's that school……..."] the attendant muttered.

I became curious on how she knew about it and asked her. It seems several people like us come over here to buy stuff every year.

However, we were the first ones to purchase this large of an amount.

Incidentally, the moment I heard the total amount of money, my eyes were almost going to pop out but this was a secret.

Luckily it was within allowance range so there wasn't any problem.

"Alright then, now that we finished buying clothes, what should we do now?"

"--------? Weren't we going to other shops to see the clothes?"

"……..No, I'll give up on that for today."

It was not hard to imagine the same result if went to another shop.

It would be faster if I say it didn't suit her but, the foundation material was good---------rather that, Julie was so good looking, to the point that, any clothes she wore suited her naturally.

More importantly, it was impossible for me to twist my thoughts and tell Julie.

In front of the small happy expression she shows when I say it suits her, there was no way I could lie.

"So, should we head back?"

"U-nn……well since we are outside, let's wander around for a bit then."

"Ja--. That's true."

Nonetheless, as expected, we had a lot of baggage so we decided to stop by the delivery counter first.

"Well, where should we go, Tooru?"

Right after we finished our delivery and lightened the load, we then decided to look around the north hall from one corner to the other.

As if it was natural for her, Julie grabbed my sleeves and walked besides me.

Although it was more or less embarrassing for me at the beginning, we talked with each other while looking at the shops until I naturally forgot about it.

After that, Julie looked at the ferret in the pet shop nearby with her eyes glittering, and played a free to play virtual game in one corner of the game shop; we were passing time peacefully and with enough fun for us to forget the tough training we go through daily.

"Now that I think back, Miyabi told me the gelato on the first floor is recommended."

"……Gelato huh. If Miyabi recommended it then, I want to try heading there but……."

As a late lunch, when Julie was about to start her pumpkin cream pasta and fondant chocolate as dessert, I recalled the talk Miyabi told me.

Even Julie isn't an exception to girlishness. It seemed Julie also loved sweets and she often changes expressions with the desserts that came out from the cafeteria.

That is why it's only normal for her to think she wanted to try something after hearing about it as a recommendation but------

Since Julie ate little in the first place, it was clear that she would lose the space for the gelato once she ate the chocolate; she knew that herself and dropped her shoulders from what I could see.

It would probably be alright after some time, but the influence would probably come back during dinner time this time if we were to do that.

"……Why don't we try buying as much gelato as you can eat for now? If you cannot finish, then I will eat the leftovers."

Because of me forgetting, her disappointed look was really pitiful and after I brought up that idea-------

"That is a good idea."

Julie brought out a happy atmosphere.

I unintentionally leaked a smile from that expression.

(This is good, this is good…….)

And like that, my thoughts were hastily over.

"Tooru. Just in case, can you eat this chocolate?"

"Aah, I don't mind."

Julie proposed this when it was half eaten.

Of course, since there was no reason to refuse, it was alright until I nodded but-------

"Please open your mouth."

"Huh?"

"Like I said, please open your mouth."

She lifted, with her fork, one mouth-full sized scoop of fondant chocolate, wrapped in cold ice, placing right it in front of me.

"…….Are you perhaps going to feed me?"

"Ja—♪Ahnn."

"N-no, doing that in front of people is a little……."

"----? Miyabi often does this to me?"

But that is between girls.

And we are of the opposite sex.

I know Julie has no other intentions, but it couldn't be helped for me to feel resistant to her actions, rather I think it's only normal to do so.

"Errrr……"

Luckily, there weren't many people in the shop since it's after lunch time, and thanks to there being many dividing panels, it's not like people could see us. It isn't as good as a window but, there was no road in front of this shop which is located on the 3rd floor but rather it's an atrium until the 1st floor so we probably won't get noticed at all.

(Well, I guess this situation is alright……?)

"------?"

*Chirin* the bell rang as if to urge me. And of course, Julie didn't have any intentions of making me hurry.

"I-I get it. Then…….."

*Ahhn* I opened my mouth wide as I was told and ate the chocolate.

(I'm glad everyone didn't come…….)

Just now, I was thinking a completely different thing than from the tailor shop earlier.

"Tooru, here you go."

"Eh? Again?"

"Ja---. There is still too much left. So, Ahhnn."

"Hahaha……okay."

In the end, I was fed around 8 times and there was one time when the shop attendant there saw us and giggled making it an awkward situation.

But------

I then found out the really problematic situation happened right after that.

"Tooru, Ahhn."

Between the south and north hall-------in a place called Harbor Street where there were many passersby, Julie brought the gelato to my mouth.

"……Eh?"

"It's very delicious so I am sharing with you. That's why Tooru, please. Ahnnn."

Inside, within the presence of a crowd of people, Julie smiled as if she was not bothered about them at all.

Of course, it was only natural for me to be bothered about the sights from our surroundings.

"----Tooru?"

She tilted her small head-----

"Ya-yaa-----……"

I answered powerlessly and let her feed me the gelato…….

## Part 2

Tooru and Julie. Unless one knew about their situation they could only be seen as an intimate couple, and there were shadows watching those two from afar.

It was Tomoe and Miyabi.

Having asked Tooru and Julie's departure time indirectly during breakfast, Miyabi and Tomoe reached the closest station near the A La Mode shopping mall one hour before those two did.

From that point on, the both of them were, sneakily, following them from behind; They acted as if they were buying things at a shop nearby the one Julie had tried on her clothes in---------(Miyabi actually bought something)------. This time they were hiding in, and peeping from, a sports shop located some ways across from the atrium where Julie and Tooru were eating at.

"Mi-Miyabi. Are those 2 really not going out with each other……?"

"U-un……..Tooru-kun said that……."

"I see……. No, but……"

During eating and this time in a manner of not bothering the public eye----------(Miyabi and Tomoe saw it like this)-------Tooru was being fed gelato by Julie.

Looking at those two, Miyabi and Tomoe panicked together.

"To-To-To-Tomoe-chan. That's errrr……..not an illicit relationship right……..?"

"N-no, i-it isn't sexual conduct so……..."

There are probably those in this society that might call these actions by a couple stupid but, at the very least it isn't any kind of an illicit relationship.

Thanks to that they could not cut in and intrude on them, only making both of them getting more and more agitated, because they couldn't take any other actions other than to watch over them.

However, the both of them were suddenly called out by a voice.

"Both of you are alone?"

"Eh……..?"

When they looked over, there were 4 guys standing there.

They were obviously picking up girls.

["If it is okay you two, want to play with us?"]["Both of you are cute. High school student? From what school?"] ["Kouryouu?"]["I know where. It's the place nearby popular with martial arts."]

The confirmation this guy made about Kouryou academy wasn't wrong.

A private school with a dormitory system, with a power structure placed within martial arts, graduation would link to an employment from the secret service.

Leaving no school services supplied by the public, because of the secret regulations from the Dawn organization, it is impossible for there to be any eye catching general information left inside people's memories.

Even if the <<Lucifer>> or <<Blaze>> had been turned into a rumor, it would probably be interpreted as absurd nonsense at most.

Unless they had definite proof it would not leave the realm of rumor, even if it was real.

Naturally, since this was also made to be fully aware to the students that went out, during the filing for permission to go out, they were not to cause any trouble outside, they were not to manifest their <<Blaze>> and etc; it was an outing with many restrictions.

By any chance that any of those rules were broken; strict punishment would be given but------

"Heeh, by martial arts is it judo or karate? So you all are doing that too?"

"Ye-yeah……."

Miyabi and Tomoe were agitated by the sudden pick up and answered the person's question honestly.

"That's nice. Then, teach us some pinning skills too."

"……..No thanks. Let's go, Miyabi."

Finally at this moment, Tomoe recognized the guys' intentions and even though she took Miyabi and left that spot-----

"That's so cold. A little is fine. We won't do anything strange."

A guy then grabbed Miyabi's arm and pulled hard.

"Ah……..."

Scared--------the moment she felt that, her body moved by reflex .

"Le-let go…….!"

*Don* Miyabi thrust the guy away.

Normally, he would stagger a bit but-------

Since her arm strength was exceedingly stronger than a normal person because of the <<Lucifer>>, the guy fell over pathetically.

["Haha, lame!"]["Shut up! My balance just collapsed!!"]

The fallen over guy shouted at his comrades who were laughing loudly.

Luckily, he was just grazed.

"Oi, oi. Give me a break from violence."

"Your side were the ones getting violent first. It's true that, thrusting him away was too much though……"

Although Tomoe entered between Miyabi and the leader, her tone of voice was weak as expected.

Naturally, the person did not let that slip by.

"If you think it was too much then, isn't it okay for you two to go out with us to reconcile?"

"I-I refuse! I will apologize but, this and that are different!!"

"To-Tomoe-chan……"

Tomoe whispered *It's alright*, to Miyabi who was seemingly becoming smaller behind Tomoe.

(I have no problems with this number of people alone…….!)

That awareness, made Tomoe's feelings stronger even if it turned into a fight.

However, Tomoe's response did not feel nice to the guys and after the guy Miyabi thrust away joined back, the guys stood and surrounded both of them like a wall.

At that moment, someone Miyabi and Tomoe were familiar with, pushed through the crowd of people and appeared.

"Stop it you bastards!!"

["What is it!?"]["Who the hell are you!!"]

Tooru was the one who stood in front of the guys.

Luckily, since they were nearby, he heard Miyabi and Tomoe's voice and ran over here.

“These two are with me. I’ll listen if you have any problems.”

["To-Tooru-kun……."]["Kokonoe……..!"]

Both of them called Tooru’s name and were a little relieved.

["He says they are with him."]["Looks real."]["What should we do?"]

On the other hand, the guys were looking at each other on what to do next from the appearance of the person who named himself as one of them-------

“Miyabi, Tomoe, are you two okay?”

At that moment, they made their decision when Julie joined.

["Wow. She’s super cute……."]["This girl is also with him?"]["The so called Harem?"]["I feel a little pissed][What should we do?"]["Obviously---"]

At the same time with the leader saying that, the guys slightly lowered their hips.

“Let’s give him a small lesson!”

“-----!!”

The guys move at the same time.

It was somewhat surprising------- but nonetheless, it still looks like it was in slow motion to Tooru who has sublimated to << Level 2 II >>.

(I have no choice then; I'll give them a light one then run away.)

*I'll push them down so they won't get hurt I guess*, it was at that moment when Tooru decided that.

*Taan*……!! A dry sound from far away-----a *gunshot* echoed in Harbor Street.

Almost at the same time, one guy that was going to punch Tooru, fell down as if he was flicked away.

"Eh……?"

In astonishment, the voice of the person who muttered that was unknown.

However, faster than everyone in that spot-------including Tooru and the group------faster than them understanding what happened , another gunshot echoed and another guy collapsed.

"Wha…….!?"

"Tooru, That's……!!"

Further ahead of Julie's sights-----around 100 meters away standing on top of the 3rd floors balcony, Tooru saw the owner who made the gunshot.

A girl with long gorgeous shining blonde hair(Yellow Topaz).

Her hand was holding a-------black long barrel <<Gun(Rifle)>>.

(Lilith!? And that's----------<<Blaze>>!?)

During the time Tooru was opening his eyes in shock, Lilith then pulled the trigger making the 3rd shot then 4th shot in an instant and all of the guys collapsed.

In the middle of the sights looking at the guys suddenly collapsing at their surroundings, Tooru and Julie were looking at the gold girl-------and were unable to take their eyes away from the <<Gun(Rifle)>> she was holding.

The thought that revived in his mind, was the talk that was taught in class last time.

**"The <<Blaze>> cannot be manifested as a weapon with complex structure."**

That talk wasn't a lie and, **a <<Gun>> type <<Blaze>> is impossible originally**.

But the <<Blaze>> being shown in Tooru and the group's sights was unmistakably a <<Gun(Rifle)>>.

Lilith made her <<Gun(Rifle)>> disappear and turned her heels around.

Yellow Topaz

While looking at the blonde hair walking away from the balcony, Tooru muttered.

"<<Exception>>……."

# Chapter 4 『Equal to the Protection of a Knight

## Part 1

"Finally a breather……"

During the time the sun was starting to set, we got onto the monorail and took a seat before making a big sigh.

"Seriously. Haaa……"

Tachibana sat opposite to me, while making a sigh overflowing with tiredness just like me.

Beside her was Miyabi while Julie was sitting beside me.

It was my fault to be the first one to sit but, it felt a little uncomfortable being surrounded by girls.

"I-I wonder if those people are alright……"

"Nai, no need to worry. They only fainted."

Right after the gun sound, I and Julie checked the pulse of the group of males and the part that got shot-------their head and after we confirmed there was a pulse and no external injuries, we immediately took Miyabi and Tachibana away from the spot.

After that, there was quite a commotion but, there was probably no one that could understand the truth of what happened there. Of course, that goes for the group of four that got shot in the head too.

"I see, it's alright then. I'm glad……"

*Hafuuu* Miyabi was the only one that made a relieved sigh.

Julie felt the same as usual but, me and Tachibana stiffened our faces.

"……That is a <<Gun(Rifle)>> <<Blaze>> right, if I am correct?"

"Aah. There is no mistake."

While Julie and Miyabi were having a conversation at the side, we started to exchange words while looking outside the window.

"The manifestation of the <<Gun(Rifle)>> huh……..just what is going on I wonder? I never heard of that before."

Tachibana probably recalled back the things that were taught in class.

She brought her eyebrows closer and took a posture as if she was troubled.

"Maybe, it's because she is ***special***."

While recalling back the conversation I had with the gold girl, I continued my words.

"Lilith said she was an <<Exception>>. And is the same as me, a <<One and only(Unrivaled)>>."

"If I think that her <<Gun[Rifle]>> is a <<Blaze>> which no one else can manifest like your <<Shield>> then, a consistency would be met."

"Aah, I thought so too……but even so, I was surprised she used her <<Blaze>> in a place with so many people like that."

"Seriously. Although we got saved but, just what was she thinking……"

"Anyway, we have to head over to Mikuni-sensei once we get back."

If we were to encounter trouble during our outings then, we have the duty to report.

"Umu, that's true……..b-by the way Kokonoe. This might be an abrupt question but------ar-are you and Julie……go-go-going out with each other?" "……huh?"

Not only did the talk change suddenly, I had no Idea what I was told for a moment.

"Wh-why that suddenly……..? Ah, maybe you are talking about us going out?"

"It's okay until there but apart from that, we unexpectedly just unexpectedly and only unexpectedly saw her feeding ic-ice cream to you and well……"

"----Uh!?"

Right now, I would definitely spit out if I had any drinks stuffed into my mouth.

"Th-that's just a portion given by Julie and……."

I then moved my sights towards Julie and Miyabi-----

They probably heard our conversation. Both of them were staring at me.

Especially Miyabi, maybe she really likes loves stories because, I could see something hot dwelling in her sights.

"A-am I right, Julie?"

"Ja--. It was very delicious so. It is expected from Miyabi's recommendation."

*Hoo* I made a sigh at Julie's reply.

……...I felt someone making a sigh just like me in the surroundings but, it was probably my imagination.

"Th-then…….the cake too?"

"Aah, Julie could not finish that so------wait, how come you two know that much!?"

[No, err, hahahaha……..] [A-ahahaha……..]

Both of their dry laughs piled against each other and echoed throughout the vehicle fruitlessly.

It became night time and the matter that happened in the A La Mode turned up in the news.

But the contents were saying 4 young men collapsed from ***heatstroke***. Instead of them fainting with an unexplainable phenomenon, also, there was completely nothing in the part where there was a quarrel before they collapsed.

The news summed up with [Please be careful of heatstroke], and changed to the next topic.

(I guess the information got manipulated…….)

When they immediately reported to Mikuni-sensei the moment they got back to the academy, he [We will deal with it immediately ] told us that and most probably that was what happened.

If I was asked whether I got saved, I would reply yes but, there was some kind of vague fear in a sense.

Whether it's the <<Qualification Ceremony>> that has completely no information leaked to the public or this matter, I wonder just how big is Kouryou academy------and also the Dawn organization's influential power.

Tsukimi said that the country is attached to this but, that fact might actually be real.

Although I am alright now because I was getting protected but, I am going to use this <<Power>> the academy side gave me for my own goal someday. I wonder how the academy side would deal with me at that time.

(……...No matter what happens, only for that guy I will definitely------)

*Girari* when I gripped my hand tightly-----

"Tooru. You can use the bath."

Fu……...I relaxed when I heard Julie's one sentence after she got out from the bath.

"Aah-----I under------wait, Julie…….!?"

"--------?"

I got surprised because Julie's clothes' was no different from usual until now; the one piece of shirt.

"Di-didn't you buy clothes……."

"I sent the clothes with the express home delivery service so, it will come tomorrow. Also------I did not buy any pajamas."

(That's true……..)

Now that she said it, it's true that she didn't buy one.

Which means; she will continue to remain in a hard to look at appearance from now on.

"It is alright. There is no problem with this."

I am the one with the problems.

I wish she would somewhat consider my feeling of embarrassment when she accidentally touches me with those slender legs when she sleeps together with me.

"By the way, Tooru."

But however--------

"……...Can I sleep with you today too?"

Not even a fragment of my thoughts reached her and Julie requested me with upturned eyes.

And like that for today too, the start of a night with endless worries has been decided…….

This happened during the end of lunch time on the next day-------

We were heading towards the school gate for the physical enhancement training for today too, and the sight of glowing gold entered the side of my sights and I stopped my legs.

"Tooru?"

Julie who was walking in front, *Chirin* looked behind.

"Sorry. Please go on ahead, Julie."

After Julie nodded, I headed to the dorm's balcony-----where I saw the light come from.

After I left the lounge, Lilith was elegantly tasting milk tea while sitting at a table.

"……Was there a table here before?"

"Sara prepared it."

Yellow Topaz

Lilith swayed her blonde hair and slightly sent her sights towards the butler standing by behind her.

"More importantly, what do you want? Did you reconsider being my <<Duo>> like I thought?"

"Sorry, but that isn't it. I just thought that you aren't going to the physical enhancement training even though it is going to start

soon. You don't show your face in class and training so, Tsukimi……Sensei was quite angry you know."

Following after she first transferred to the school, Lilith did not show up in either classes or training.

"I don't really mind it. I did not come to Japan to take on something like that."

"It might be true but, I do think studying is important though……."

"I already finished high-school level of study a long time ago. There is no choice to become an <<Exceed>> unless I enter this school so, I just became a member."

"T-that's amazing……"

Whether its Lilith or Julie, it seems the foreigners in our class have very excellent results.

"But if that is the case then-----"

Then, I think it's better if you at least come to training.

My words were interrupted before I could say that.

"You know. Why must I be told that by you?"

"What do you mean by why------if you don't pass time with everyone then, you might get left out in the class you know. If that happens then you can't make any friend right?"

I think she is already being left out but, I think it's still in a stage for recovery.

"……...You're a softhearted person huh."

"I-isn't it normal?"

"It seems you jumped in to cover the girls in the A La Mode too; I think you are softhearted enough though?"

"It's only normal to save a comrade."

"……...Fuun. I don't hate those kinds of things."

Her blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes stared at me and *doki* my heart skipped.

"O-oh yeah. Speaking of A La Mode, I have something I want to ask you. Yesterday why were you-----"

"Wait a moment, Kokonoe Tooru."

Lilith interrupted my words and stood up before making a mischievous smile.

"Let's see…….if you want me to answer your question then, go out with me now ♪"

"Go out with you……there is a class after----"

"Don't make me say it twice."

Just like the reenactment from a few days ago, I felt a little regretful to have talked to Lilith.

Just when I was brought to the staff member building's courtyard, I was a taken back.

There was a helicopter ready for takeoff over there. It seems it was for private use.

My clothes and hair got messed up by the wind produced by the rotor.

"Where are we going with this……."

"Fufu, A nice place ♪"

Although I asked her when I was about to get into the helicopter, it seemed she was planning not to tell me.

(Ya-re Ya-re. Just where am I being brought to-----)

*Fuwa*.

The moment we took off, my balance collapsed when I was attacked by a floating feeling as if I lost my foot hold.

If I did not have the seat belt on my hips then, I would have probably rolled down to the ground pathetically.

*Pofuu*

But, I don't know whether it was lucky or unlucky, I collapsed to the side.

During that time, since Lilith spread out her arms to catch me in reflex, my face dug in between her soft and big breasts.

"Hey, are you okay?"

"So-sorry…… I was surprised because it suddenly felt light when we flew so……..."

I was asked ***what are you doing*** and I replied back while feeling embarrassed.

"Puu. How pathetic……well leaving that aside, could you hurry up and get away? You're a little heavy."

"So-sorry!! It wasn't on purpose! But sorry!!"

"Be careful okay, fufu."

After I apologized while quickly separating my body, Lilith placed her hands on her mouth and giggled as if my panic was to her liking. The appearance of a gold girl laughing that happily was enough for me to be pulled to that charm and I was charmed by it for a while but------ I then noticed her butler Sara was giving me one heck of a glare behind her.

(Scaryyyy!!)

Although we left from Kouryou academy, it did not take even 5 minutes for the helicopter to land somewhere.

"This is……..."

Everyone would know if they are Japanese------it isn't exaggerating for me to say that; it was a horror theme park.

Although she nodded, her blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes were fixed towards the DNL (Death New Land).

It might be my imagination that those eyes looked very excited and could not calm down.

"Alright then, I will be going now Sara."

"------!? O-ojou-sama, I……..!?"

"Sorry but, please take care of the stuff. I am going to deepen my relationship with my future <<Duo>>. Come on, let's go Kokonoe Tooru."

"Uooh!?"

*Gui* at the same time with my hands being pulled, Lilith started to run.

While feeling the sight of resentment coming again from my back, I ran together with her in a bind.

"It's Turner! Turner is here! Look look, Kokonoe Tooru!"

We entered the park and Lilith pointed excitedly at the animal cartoon-costume.

Coupled with that appearance, more sights coming from the surroundings started to gather on the mascot character.

Incidentally while my hand was being grabbed, I couldn't handle being the target of attention too.

"You aren't a child so you don't really have to make such a fuss ……"

"Well sorry. I was looking forward to this place since I got here. "

"Is that so. It sort of feels unexpected……."

"I can't help it since UK doesn't have one. When I decided to go to Japan, I thought that I definitely have to come here."

While replying *I see*, I felt that I saw a new face of the girl called Lilith.

Free, uncontrolled, and smart, she is from a distinguished family and an ojou-sama here overseas, also----

The <<Exception>> that uses the <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

There is new info added into it other than the one i knew, and that is, she has a normal face of liking DNL.

(It would be nice if she tried getting closer to the class like this though……..)

If she continued not going to class and taking training like now then, I feel that she would be left out by the class sooner or later……no, I think she was quite left out already.

"Speaking of which is it okay to leave the maid------not that, the butler behind?"

"Aah, Sara? It's okay. That girl is a little overprotective so, she would definitely not let me get on a roller coaster saying that it's dangerous. To me who likes thrilling entertainment, I just can't stand it."

"It's normal to make sure that the master does not go through any danger but, it's true that, that is overprotective……"

"Right? Even though it's okay……"

Lilith placed her hands on her hips and made a big sigh before making a wry smile.

"But, why is a girl a butler?"

"Her family has been working as my family's butlers for generations. Her grandfather retired 3 years ago, and that girl became my personal attendant."

It seems they have been together since the age of awareness and were raised like sisters.

"She was originally a girl that was always sticking close to me so; she made an amazing face when I told her that I got interested in you. That was interesting, fufufu."

(No wonder…….)

I got convinced, when I recalled back the time when she poured the milk tea violently for me, and that time when Lilith held on to me inside the helicopter.

"Since before, that girl……aah, Rogers! It's Rogers in the flesh !!"

In the middle of our conversation, Lilith saw the DNL main mascot and got excited.

From what I could see, I could only think that she was a normal girl.

"Ahhh mou, I can't stand looking from so far away! We're going to take a photo, Kokonoe Tooru!!"

After saying that, she linked her arms around mine.

However, since I was being pulled towards her, it was not something like walking together while having our arms linked.

“Wait wahh!? Le-Lilith! To-touc……no, wait, let goo!”

“We can’t afford to wait right! Touc? What is that, what is the meaning?”

Of course, there was no way I could voice it out and explain the meaning to her.

Something like, Lilith’s big soft breasts were touching me.

What’s more, it was shaking because she was running. *Tayun** Tayun* and would touch me each time it shook.

There is no way that any male would not get agitated from this, because of that; I made a shout inside my heart.

(Gi-give me a break----------!!)

Not long later, the sun set and the surroundings were starting to get wrapped in the night’s darkness-----

I used up all my strength when I was brought around the park and was leaning on the bench completely exhausted.

"What a pathetic appearance…….here, cola."

Lilith felt astounded at my state.

After saying my thanks and receiving the cola, I then moistened my throat.

"Seriously, weren't you training yourself normally?"

"Even when you ask me that, these circumstances are different from the training, and also-----"

"Also?"

"…….Nothing."

Since there were a lot of times we moved around while linking arms, my mental strength kept on reducing.

"Well, forget it. Let me drink too."

After saying that, she *hyoi* took the cola I just drank, put in a straw and placed her mouth on the straw.

"I-if you wanted to drink cola too then, can't you just buy two?"

While feeling the action happening in front of me with my heart pumping, I tried asking her------

"I can't finish one drink alone. I'm bad with carbonated drinks."

"You say you are bad with it but, aren't you drinking it then?"

"I shook it before handing it to you to make it less carbonated."

"Evil……."

If she did not tell me then, I would have thought that the carbonate was just weaker.

I learned that there are a lot of truths that you are better off not knowing in this world.

"Ah----, that was fun. How long has it been since I played this much……"

*Thud* Lilith sat beside me before, making a big stretch with her back.

Just like her words, she was making a satisfied smile on her face .

I then moved my sights towards the sky and saw one and two stars glittering although it was hard to see it because there were quite a few lights in the park.

Julie and the rest are probably together eating dinner by now.

(I wonder if everyone is worried. It's inconvenient not to have a phone at times like this.)

Normally, Kouryou academy students are made to own a phone.

The academy would prepare one to be loaned when going out of school but, because I was brought outside in a special way by Lilith today, I don't have it.

"The Night parade is later. I was looking forward to this too. It seems that it's going to begin soon so, it is probably the best to take it easy until then. This is for you too."

"I am really thankful for the consideration……...by the way, is it okay to talk a little until the parade starts?"

"Okay. I did promise to answer your questions if you went out with me."

I thought of what to ask at Lilith's nod.

There were two things I wanted to ask.

"Let's see. First off-----"

I hesitated in which one I should ask first before, determining.

"Lilith, you said that you are a <<Exception>> last time right? Is it because you can manifest a <<Blaze>> <<Gun>>(Rifle)?"

"That is one of the reasons. My <<Blaze>> is a <<One kind of a blaze>>(Unrivaled Blaze). Originally, it is impossible for the <<Blaze>> to manifest into complex weapons. You know that right?"

"Aah. If I am correct, the reason is that the <<Soul>> is in a simple state I think."

The weapon to manifest the <<Soul>>, the <<Blaze>>-----

Why is everyone's weapon different?

That's because everyone's <<Soul>> was different; that was the biggest reason.

But that was not all.

There exist many types of weapon data from the old east and west inside the <<Lucifer>>.

While taking experience and desire into account on top of everything else, the <<Soul>> would pick the most corresponding weapon for the body, and as a result create various types of weapons for each respectively; it seems that is the case.

"Since I was young, my hobby has been hunting."

After making the shape of a gun with her finger, the gold girl * Bam* made a shooting pose while muttering that.

"Having hunting as your hobby is quite a special one……"

"Really? It's not that rare around me though."

……It felt like a talk from another world.

"However------hunting as a hobby huh…….You can manifest the <<Gun[Rifle]>> with only that reason?"

No matter if she had many years of experience, I think that reason was insufficient to manifest a <<Blaze>> that was special enough to be called <<One and only[Unrivaled]>>.

"…….There is the thing about understanding the gun's structure in detail right? I have performed dis-assembly and re-construction many times already."

"Does hunting make you do something to that extent?"

"No way. You normally don't do that. But, I just thought I should know better about the weapon that gives me the custody to life, and to take away life."

After saying that, the gold girl joined her hands and stretched forward.

"Well, because there is that, the gun to me is my most familiarized weapon of all. That is why I think my <<soul>> manifested as an <<Unrivalled Blaze>>."

After hearing Lilith's story, I understood.

I think that is a rare example but, it's true that if she was so familiar with it then, it might be possible for the <<Soul>> to pick the <<Gun>>, and thus.
Rifle

"What about you?"

"Eh?"

"Like I said, I am asking whether or not you have any reason that comes to mind on why your <<Soul>> manifested as a <<Shield>>."

"Any reason that comes to mind, huh……"

There was something that comes up.

The one that could be called my core right now would be the matter with ***that person***.

Nonetheless, I didn't feel like talking about that as expected and said [I don't know] before swinging my head.

"Fuun, you don't understand it yourself too. How mysterious……"

"Well yeah. More importantly------"

After I got her attention off the <<Shield>>, I then returned back to the continuation of questions although it was quite forceful .

"Just now, you said that the <<Gun>> (Rifle) is one of the reasons why you are called <<Exception>> so, what's the other reason?"

"My family is rich."

[Well……that's true I guess] I could only nod at that weird reply.

Because she has a butler serving her, and owns a helicopter for personal use so, it would stranger to not think she was not rich.

"Have you heard of the Bristol company?"

"…….Was it a Tyre maker?"

"No, seriously……it is quite a famous corporation in UK and my grandfather is the head. And also---The Bristol Company is one of the investors for Dawn organization."

I did not even need to ask this anymore because; Dawn organization was the founder of Kouryou academy.

Which meant-----

"The grandchild of a big shot is the manifestor of the << One kind of a blaze (Unrivaled Blaze)>>. And that is why Lilith is given the authority of being treated as the <<Exception>> huh……"

There were no words of consent but, the gold girl just smiled.

That was probably the answer.

Normally, I would move to the other question I first thought of but------

I have come to be curious from the replies she made just now.

"Even though you are born in a house like that, why did you think you want to be an <<Exceed>>?"

Judging from the talks just now, it seemed she was not worried about financial problems so, I had no idea why she picked the road of the <<Exceed>> which would involve undertaking dangerous jobs in her future prospects.

"There are a lot of reasons. An ojou-sama has worries and thoughts of their own but……..Leaving that aside, even you have them right? A reason to be an <<Exceed>>."

I got taken back by Lilith's words.

"That's true…….sorry, please pretend that I didn't ask that question."

"It's okay, really. You're a serious one, to apologize for something like that……"

She shrugged her shoulder and made a wry smile.

"……...Ah, the parade started. Is it alright to end question time about now?"

Although we couldn't see it, Lilith moved her sights to the sound which could be heard from far away.

"No, there is one more thing I want to ask."

After saying that, I threw the 2nd question at her.

"Why did you use your <<Blaze>> in the A La Mode? I am thankful for the save but, no matter if Lilith is the <<Exception>>, wasn't it bad to manifest it in a place with that many people?"

Most of the people were paying attention to the commotion we made and probably did not notice the existence of Lilith-------who was holding the <<Gun>> (Rifle) in her hands and was far away in the upper floor.

But there should be quite a number who noticed the gunshot and looked at Lilith.

Even though I did not put my thoughts into words-----the gold girl swung her head while making a smile.

"Something like that won't make a big fuss. Nobody would think it is real anyway."

That might be the case.

***Since there was no one injured'***, the worst that could be thought of would be some kind of accident.

"More importantly---------it is only normal to show your <<Duo >> your <<Blaze>>."

(She still hasn't given up yet huh……..)

Even though I clearly refused her, it seems she was not discouraged from that.

“You’re making a face, saying I haven’t given up yet right.”

It seems it was coming out from my face.

“But I won’t give up that easily. That’s because the teaming up of our <<Duo>> is -------”

Lilith energetically stood up and turned around.

“Because of fate.”

The parks' lighting----- lights with many types of color was in her background, while she shot those blue Sapphire blue gemstone eyes at me.

Her sparkling blonde Yellow Topaz hair was swaying, and towards that inhuman------fairy-like appearance, the heartbeat from my chest increased.

"F-fate you say……how did you feel something like that from me?"

My asking voice turned a little shrill.

"I rejoiced when I found out there was another <<Unrivaled Blaze>> user like me. That I wasn't the only <<One kind of a blaze>> Unrivalled>>……..."

The gold girl gently closed her eyes.

"I then felt it. That the only one suitable to be my <<Duo>> is you, the <<Irregular Blaze>>."

Lilith piled her hands on top of each other before placing it on her voluptuous chest and continuing on.

"My <<Rifle>> will shoot the enemy, and you will block the blades with your <<Shield>>. Yes, equal to the protection of a knight. That's why------"

Her closed eyes slowly opened together with the sound of the parade coming closer.

Under the 7 lights coming from the parade, the gold girl extended out her hand.

"It's not my principle but, I'll say it once more."

The cheers welled up together with the echoing voice.

But even though it was inside that whirlpool of excitement, Lilith's words clearly reached me.

"Become my <<Duo>>, Kokonoe Tooru."

I found confidence overflowing in her words.

That it was the best path, that I would follow her words; Lilith believed that.

But------

The answer did not change.

"I have a precious <<Duo>>. That is why I can't team up with Lilith."

"------!! That's------"

"I vowed to become her power. For that girl, and for me…….. that's is why no matter how many time you ask, my feelings will never change." In an instant, *Paan* a dry sound echoed but, it got erased by the parade.

I found out about what happened only from the pain of my cheek.

"……..Aren't you an idiot. To refuse my invitation twice------"

Lilith turned her face away and muttered.

"I will definitely not forgive you."

"Tooru. Welcome back."

The time for lights out was near and at the same time as I opened the room door, Julie ran over to me.

It was hard from an outsider's perspective but, her expression was somewhat cheerful.

That was probably because I am with Julie the longest compared to everyone else.

"You came back so late. I was worried since you did not come to class. Miyabi was very worried too."

"Sorry to make you worry. There was a lot of stuff."

"Nai. There is no problem if you are not hurt."

"I have to apologize to Miyabi tomorrow."

"Ja---. That's right."

In the end, after that------

Having her pride hurt, Lilith left without seeing my face.

Because I was the cause of it, I did not chase after her and came back alone using the train.

She probably got back here already, I think I saw the helicopter that I rode on flying to the east, while on the train back from DNL.

And the thing that was waiting for me when I got back was a reflection paper and a lecture from Mikuni-sensei.

I did not and wasn't planning to tell him that I went out because I got dragged by Lilith but, it seemed that there were some staff members that saw me getting on the helicopter.

Even though the reason for my no permission outing was the < <Exception>>, it meant that the academy still has some dignity.

"Tooru, have you finished your dinner?"

"I had some snacks but, I am still hungry I guess."

"I received some from the cafeteria so, would you want to eat? Or do you want to enter the baths first?"

"Let's see…….I'll get into the baths first then. I feel dusty since I was walking around inside a crowd of people."

"Ja--. You can go in anytime so go on ahead."

"I see. Thanks, Julie."

After a short reply, I gently patted her hand and Julie looked ticklish.

I then headed into the bath immediately-----

After I took my time submerging myself into the bathtub, I heard the sound of the bathroom glass door getting knocked when I started to think I should get out soon.

"Tooru."

"What is it?"

"I forgot to bring the chopsticks so, I will head to the cafeteria to get it."

"Ah, sorry about that------hey, wait a second Julie! It's bad right now!"

Of course, her clothes were the problem.

Going outside the room with one shirt on was dangerous in a lot of ways.

"Nai, it is alright. I will go while not getting spotted by the dorm advisor."

"I see. Then-----no, just because the lights are off, I don't mean that……..!"

My voice did not reach her and I heard the door closing.

(This is bad! This is really bad!)

I simply wiped my body after I got out of the bathtub in a panic and put on my shirt before jumping out the room.

My target location was obviously the cafeteria.

The lights were off and luckily there was no one in the dark corridor.

While making a sigh of relief, I jogged through the corridor and reached the cafeteria located beside the lounge.

"Ah-re?"

The cafeteria door was shut tight and there was no presence of anyone inside even though I examined inside.

(Did she get back the room?)

However, there was no way I would fail to notice Julie, even though the lights were off.

"Julie?"

Thinking maybe, I tried calling out to her with a soft voice and-----

"Ja—"

Together with that reply, Julie face sprung out from behind the sofa.

"Why are you at a place like that……."

"Since the cafeteria was closed, I tried finding whether or not if there was a replacement for the chopsticks."

When she heard my footsteps, it seemed she hid herself thinking that the dorm advisor was patrolling.

"Tooru why did you come here?"

Julie tilted her head in wonder, because I appeared here when I was supposed to be in the baths.

"……I don't know about Gimle but, walking around outside in your pajamas in Japan is not mannerly."

"Is that so……I am lucky no one found me. I will be careful from now on."

I made a guts pose in my heart at Julie's reply. It was perfect for a random sentence.

"There should be a coffee spoon if I am correct so, let's take that and head back."

"Ja--. Let's do that."

***Eating is going to look tough but***…….just when I was thinking things like that.

I heard someone walking from far away and saw the light of the flashlight illuminating nearby.

"-------Uh! Is it the dorm advisor!!"

"Come here!!"

I followed Julie's soft shout and headed behind the sofa.

The light from the flashlight illuminated the lounge, after I hid quickly without making any sound for a while.

But, if there was a problem then------it was narrow.

Because of that, it was only natural to bring our bodies closer but……..

(Cl-close……rather than calling this close, this posture is very bad in a lot of ways!!)

It was normal for our breath to touch each other and my body was being caught between Julie's legs.

My chest was beating violently.

If I get found in a place like this then,

Even though I tried to separate my body in panic------

"……Tooru, please come closer. We will get found."

Julie whispered and pulled my body closer with her hand.

(Ah, I touched her legs! I can't say where it is but, I touched it! This is bad! Julie------!!)

"--------?"

Julie tilted her head at me, when I was resisting while shouting in my heart.

Inside the darkness, a desperate conflict of offense and defense ( Mainly me) was taking place in the shadows.

Even though the light moved around the lounge, the illumination did not reach the secretive conflict----

The light and footsteps then left after a while before Julie finally let me go.

I stood up, while feeling completely exhausted from the strong feeling of tiredness.

"Th-thankfully we weren't found……..let's get the spoon and head back."

"Nai."

When I asked why to Julie who shook her head left and right----

"When I think about the patrolling course, returning now is not a good plan. If things go bad, we might accidentally bump into the dorm advisor who is coming back."

She then replied with a convincing answer.

"That's true. Then let's pass time here for a while I guess."

"…… If that is the case then, let's go there."

Julie pointed her finger towards the window.

The entrance to the balcony was there.

It was the place where I received Julie's confession under the blue moon.

"……I understand."

After I nodded, we left the lounge without making any sound.

The cold wind brushed my cheeks as if it was calming my throbbing heartbeat from a while ago.

"It's a little cold at a time like this as expected."

"This temperature is just right for me."

After slightly making a comfortable expression from the wind brushing her cheeks, Julie placed her hands on the handrail and looked up at the moon which has waned more than half already.

"It's going to get hotter from now though."

"……...I will work hard."

Even though she clenched both her fist, I don't know how and what she is going to work hard for.

"Tooru……."

"What's wrong?"

While Julie was the one who called out first, I called out to Julie who went silent just like that.

"I am wondering if it is okay if I asked where you went today……."

"What, is that it. I don't mind."

After saying that, I recalled back the good time I had with Lilith ------and what's more, it was in DNL.

Julie is my <<Duo>>; she was not my girlfriend or anything.

Nonetheless, I think it's not a good feeling to hear that my partner was playing with another girl for a whole day without telling me anything.

"-----Tooru?"

"A-aah……."

Julie tilted her small head when I changed places with her and went silent.

"……...I went out with Lilith. Err, together to Death New land."

"Death New?"

"It's the nearby theme park but, you don't know?"

"Sorry. I did not study enough……"

I swung my head in panic at Julie who got dejected.

"N-no, isn't it okay to not know if you don't know. And well, I had a good time…….with her there."

"Is that so."

She nodded while not making much change in her expression.

When Julie slightly moves her expression at times like these, it makes it very hard to know about how she was receiving my words and what her thoughts about it were; this makes it very problematic.

Most likely, it does not look like she was angry but……..

"……...Was it fun?"

"Eh…….A-aah…..it felt like I was getting dragged around at first but, before I knew it, well. Un, it was fun."

For an instant, I hesitated to answer.

But, I then immediately told her honestly------

My chest hurt when I said the last part.

"That is good."

A small smile was what she replied back.

"That's right……."

After I said my true feelings, I nodded.

But, my chest got a sharp pain once again the moment I nodded .

"……Did something happen?"

Maybe she felt something from my response.

Julie looked troubled before asking.

"……..Some time ago, Lilith dragged me out on the day she transferred here right. On that day-----"

When I suddenly switched the talk to a few days back, Julie kept quiet and lent her ear.

"Lilith invited me to become her <<Duo>>."

"……But by rule, a <<Duo>> that gets established once-----"

"It can be determined by my will……...she would **specially** permit that, the chairman told me that."

"Is……that so……"

I thought of keeping quiet a few days ago. Because I did not want Julie to worry unnecessarily.

But------I decided to tell her this time.

"I was asked the same thing again by Lilith today too."

Julie kept quiet at my continuing words.

"Well, I refused both times. But because of that, I made Lilith hate me a little."

I reported the results with the clearest voice I could make. I mixed in a wry smile at the end though.

"Tooru……"

"Sorry. For keeping quiet about something this important."

"Nai. I think Tooru has your own thoughts. That's why-----"

Just when I thought her words got cut half-way------

Julie's hand piled on top of mine.

"Thank you very much for picking me, Tooru. When I think about being together after this, I feel happy."

"Aah me too. I am happy being together with Julie too."

"Ja---♪"

After saying that, the silver girl smiled happily under the moonlight.

"I-it's about time we head back okay? I think the patrol will be over by now……..."

It felt embarrassing having her joy directed straight at me and I turned to return back to the room.

But------

"……...Is it okay……for a little more."

Julie silently swung her head because she wanted to continue talking more.

But, if talking was the only thing she wanted, then she could just continue after we head back to the room really.

On the other hand, if she was being cautious of the dorm adviser still patrolling then she could just tell me about it.

Which meant-----

"……I understand. But, we have to go back before our bodies get cold."

"Ja--. If that is the case then……"

When I thought that, Julie took a step closer-----

"-----!?"

She then entered my chest area and brought her body closer as if she was leaning her body on me.

"I think it would be warmer like this. ----Tooru?"

"A-aah……."

Julie looked up at me in wonder at my awkward answer.

"Actually, it would be nice if I could hug Tooru but……..."

It was something difficult to the Julie who was the smallest among the girls.

"That is why; please hug me tightly like a hot-water bottle like this. I think you would be warmer if you do that."

(E-even if you tell me that…….)

I could not hide my agitation at her usual defenseless state.

If it was the afternoon and we were facing each other then she would probably notice.

But, it's night time now and Julie was unable to see my face.

"Tooru. Like this."

Since I did not hug her tightly, Julie took my arm and wrapped it around her body like a muffler.

"It is warm."

"Th-that's because I just got off the bath……..."

Actually, I have already cooled down but, my body temperature probably rose up from my nervousness.

(Ca-ca-calm down, me. more importantly……)

After breathing in 2, 3 times, I switch my mood------

And softly talked to her.

“Julie…….you have something to tell me right?”

“……Ja---”

“Is it……about the scar on your back?”

Silence took over the spot-----

And not long later, she nodded back as a reply.

(Like I thought……..)

This balcony was the place I heard her confession at--------

What is going to begin now was the continuation of that night.

“I am also the same as Tooru-------an <<Avenger>>.”

For me and Julie who are completely different in every way, that was the only common point.

There was a burning flame of hatred living in our hearts.

For me, my sister------

For Julie------

“My papa was killed……”

After I was a little shocked, I felt that it was like what I thought.

My speculation I made the next day after that confession was not a mistake.

“In front of me, that person did that to my papa…….”

I lowered my sight, and Julie started muttering her memories of hatred blandly.

“I did not know this at that time but, I heard that my papa was stronger than everyone else. That, he was the hero of Gimle that everyone acknowledged if you ask them about his name……”

Maybe, Julie’s sword talent might be taken from her father.

And that talent bloomed as a source of the darkness called revenge; it might be something sad but------I thought that, while lending my ears to Julie.

"But to me, he was a kind father. He would smile every time and would love me and mama……"

Julie's hands piled on top of my arms.

Even though the back I was sticking to was warm, her white slender fingers were quite cold.

"But during a certain winter night. Papa left the house while making a stern face. He left after telling me not to follow him no matter what since he was going to come back immediately…….I will not forget his face at that time. I will not forget……...the face my kind papa showed me for the first time."

*Gyuu* Julie put in the strength into her hand.

Right now, I who held the same target called revenge with her understood the feeling Julie was feeling this moment.

That is-----regret.

The feeling of never ending grief no matter how much we do it, towards the choices we made before.

That regret made this small body trembled.

"I was worried. Even though he said that he was going to come back immediately, papa was not really coming back------not long later, the moment I heard a strong earth tremor, I swung off Mama 's restraints and jumped out of the house."

If she had not jumped out the house at that time-------

No, if her father stopped her from going outside then, Julie would probably not be here.

She would be surrounded by kind parents in her hometown, and probably live a life without any battles.

But, time will never reverse back and those normal days will never come.

"I headed towards the field I often go with my family. It was deep in the forest, and it was a beautiful place with flowers blooming everywhere during spring."

Julie looked nostalgic, but sad while looking up at the sky and talked about her hometown.

"But on that day, a hell-like scenery unfolded in front of my eyes."

Trees were mowed down and there were several big holes on the ground, Julie then continued.

"An indescribable grand fight unfolded in front of my eyes……….and not long later."

Julie dropped her sights to her leg from the moon.

"Papa……...lost……when I ran over to papa who collapsed in front of that man……he pat my head and smiled apologetically……..and……..."

Her voice trembled and she could not finish her words.

"……"

Both of us passed the time without saying anything.

I cannot heal the wound inside Julie's heart.

But even so, I hugged her a little tighter.

"This scar on my back was given by that man. In order for me to not forget the sadness of my father's death, in order for me to not forget about the hate towards the man that killed my father…… do not forget, do not forget, never forget…….he carved it there so that I would come to kill him someday."

Julie let go of my hand and took 1, 2 steps forward before slightly looking back.

She then placed her hand on her shoulders as if she was going to touch the scar carved onto her back.

"That is why this scar-----is a curse. As long as this curse is not released, the flames of hatred will continue burning my body forever and I am not forgiven to move forward……."

Julie made a big sigh.

She made long sigh as if to calm her rippling heart.

"I want <<Power>>……. The <<Power>> to achieve my revenge. That is the reason why I enrolled to Kouryou academy and my goal……."

"…….. I see……"

Just like Julie's words, it's true that we are the same.

We had our precious people get stolen by <<Power>> and were <<Avengers>> that chose to have revenge with <<Power>>.

Normally, I should be stopping her by telling her that revenge is useless and the deceased does not wish for that.

But I could not stop Julie.

Because, I devoted myself to revenge and have no intentions of stopping.

"……..Julie. Sorry to make you talk and recall back something painful. But, err…….it might be now of all times after finishing hearing your talk but, is it really okay to tell me that?"

"Nai."

Julie placed her index finger on my lips.

"I talked because I wanted to talk. More importantly…… it really is now of all times, Tooru."

At the end, Julie in a rare occasion------however for only an instant------made a mischievous smile and told me that the conversation on the balcony was over.

That was why I would match the atmosphere and replied back in a cheerful and joking manner.

"Alright, let's go back this time. As expected, I think my stomach won't last any more than this."

Immediately after that, my stomach growled as if to turn my proclamation into reality.

"Ja--♪"

## Part 2

(I wonder if Tooru-kun is back already……?)

Standing at the opened window, Miyabi absentmindedly thought about Tooru.

Being the last person who was with Tooru, even Julie said that she did not know what he went to do after lunch.

Just where did he go-------

There was one boy that said he ran away because training was hard but, Miyabi muttered that it was not true.

It was impossible to think Tooru would run away when he was the one that pushed her back when she was about to give up.

But, the sun set and it was almost time for lights out but even so , it seemed Tooru had not come back to the dormitory.

(It's around there right…….)

Outside the window, she directed her eyes to the room at the right hand side at the lower floor.

It's not like she couldn't see because there was no light but, unluckily since Tooru's room was quite far away from Miyabi and Tomoe's room, she could not see properly.

Tomoe who was reading a book, lifted her face and called out to Miyabi.

"Miyabi. How about getting into the baths soon?"

"Ah…….Th-that's right, un……"

Because Miyabi was worried about Tooru's return and read a book in the lounge until it was time for lights out, she did not take a bath.

(I can meet him tomorrow right……..)

Miyabi took off her clothes while telling herself that it would definitely be okay but--------

"Mi-miyabi. Is it alright for you to take off your clothes once you enter the bathroom……..?"

"Eh? Ah-----"

Miyabi regained herself when she was called out again about the time she was taking her bra off.

"A-ahahaha……okay, I will go to the bath, Tomoe-chan."

Miyabi made a wry smile and entered the bathroom.

Tomoe saw her off before making a sigh.

(Oh my oh my…….Kokonoe is a troublesome one.)

Tomoe noticed the reason why Miyabi was acting strange.

---Even though she said that, that was the only thing she could think off.

Similarly, Tomoe was also worried even though she did not show it out from her attitude.

(Tomorrow, I have to have a word with him if he is back.)

Maybe it was for Miyabi's sake or……..

*Hyuu* the wind blew in from the window that was left open.

(Her body might be cold if she gets out of the baths so, I guess I' ll close it then.)

Feeling the chill of the night, Tomoe stood at the side of the window.

Just like Miyabi just now, she took a glance at the direction of Tooru's room to the right side before closing the window.

If she directed her eyes towards the balcony to the left side during that time-----

If Tomoe discovered Tooru hugging Julie then there might be change in her mental state.

But, Tomoe did not notice them and left the window.

Nobody would know whether or not it was unlucky or lucky.

# Chapter 5 『Kouryou Battle(Game)》,Start

## Part 1

"Alrighty then, how many of you remember about the inter-league match "

Most of the class raised their hands at Tsukimi's question.

Of course, ***it was most of the class not all of them.***

"…….Kokonoe-kun. Why. Did. You. Not remember~?"

Tsukimi was poking my forehead with her fingers while making a business smile.

"I recalled back when I heard it just now."

"I'll kill you."

Tsukimi returned to her true-self for an instant and mumbled something before putting back her smiling mask on again.

"Okay okay, it looks like there is one very pathetic person who did not remember sensei's talk so, I'll explain this once more♪ Late this month, there will be an interleague match held with the 2nd years. And the name is <<Kouryou battle>>, Okay?"

"Is it something like the <<New blade battle(Newcomer battle)>>?"

"Yes yes. But this time it isn't a <<Duo>> battle but instead it is a battle between the grades. The first years vs the chosen members from the 2nd year."

"Sensei, I got a question. Why does the 2nd year have to go with chosen members?"

"That's because, if we normally went with everyone in the 1st year vs everyone in the 2nd year then it wouldn't be much of a battle right?"

Tsukimi replied back with the harsh reality in a light tone to the girl who asked.

Sublimating to <<Level 2 II>> was the condition for promotion to year 2.

Judging on how strong I got after the physical enhancement, if we fought the whole 2nd year then we would have a hopelessly large difference in battle potential even though we were winning in numbers.

Tsukimi then continued explaining the rules.

The contents were roughly summarized.

○Everyone in the 1st year, and 4 teams of <<Duo>> chosen from the 2nd year.

○Usage of the <<Blaze>> permitted.

○Time limit is 1 hour.

○The place is at the training area.

○It would be the first years' victory if the flag is toppled within time limit.

"……Which means, it's alright to think of this as a Botaoshi[2E 1] right?"

Tachibana was the one who said that bluntly.

"YES♪"

(It is totally different from the <<New blade battle>>(Newcomer battle)……..)

Different from the <<New blade battle>>(Newcomer battle) which was attentive to actual battles, the <<Kouryou battle>> this time felt like a contest-----no, a game.

Judging by the rules, the first plan of the 2nd years would be not having their flags toppled so, they would probably be on their

defensive side. However, as long as we use the numbers crossing 40 people and attack while having the mindset that there is no necessity to defeat the 2nd years then-------

"You are making a face as if the 1st year has the advantage?"

"…….We-well I do think so."

She hit the bull's eye, and I nodded while contemplating whether my thinking was wrong.

"Tentatively, the 2nd years' percentage for winning is about 70% for this event."

8 vs 40----

There was no way we would lose if we looked at numbers but, the 2nd years had already overcome the strict training during the 1st year and most likely have a few numbers of << Level 3 III >> within them.

Also, the reason why their winning percentage crossed 70% was because they formed strategies to cover up the difference in people .

"So with that said, if you all don't use your heads then you all will get beaten up senselessly you know, ♪But, you will all win if you topple the flag so good luck ♥"

(Ya-re Ya-re. Don't say it like it's easy…….)

Even though we have 10 <<Level 2 II>>, the 2nd year have gone through accumulated tough training during their first year. Incomparable to us, they probably had tactics and strategy slammed into them and more importantly, the biggest problem was that they might have a <<Level 3 III>>.

(As expected, it is important to make a good plan……..)

Although I was thinking that, honestly speaking I really wanted to try and have a straight on match with the <<Level 3 III>>.

Even if I didn't win, having a battle against a strong person would become important experience.

"Ah, oh yeah. It seems the 2nd years are going to have their members selected today so, let's go spy on them♪"

"That's one heck of a bold way to spy……"

"I don't think we will get exposed if we go quietly "

"There is no way spying with 40 people and above would not get exposed……"

In the end, after we accepted to boldly go observe them, everyone in the class moved to the training area.

There was already a battle royal commenced in the middle of the battle field to choose the members and we sat down in the gallery.

(Hn? The chairman is here too……..)

I found the girl wearing a gothic dress at the visitor seat.

Just like usual, Mikuni-sensei was sitting beside her and the 2nd year's homeroom teacher were sending their sights to the battle field.

"Tooru. What are you day dreaming for. You're going to miss it. "

"A-aah, sorry……."

I quickly looked at the battle field after I got rebuked by Tora----

As expected from the << Level 2 II >> group who had accumulated training for the past year.

I made a breath of admiration when I saw them freely work with their <<Duo>> and performed excellent combinations with their physical abilities as if it were normal for them.

There were 3 people in there that stood-out.

Judging by the clear difference in physical abilities compared to the other 2nd years, they were probably << Level 3 III >>.

Within the 3 of them, it seemed 2 of them were <<Duo>> and were providing cover for each other's gaps while maintaining a non-aggressive defense.

Even though they were targeted by several opponents, they would counter back with great combinations each time.

The remaining person was quite skilled and kept defeating other students one after another because there was a difference in physical ability.

Soon, the battle royal had come to an end and the 3 <<Level 3 III>> stood victorious as if it was natural.

"How do you look at it? Think you can win?"

"It would be tough to handle their total force but since we can by toppling the flag as the rule says, let's go with that initial plan."

When I looked over to Tachibana sitting beside me, she replied back like that.

As if to continue my words, Julie and Tora gave their comments .

"From what I can see, it seems they are just slightly slower than Tsukimi-sensei. If it is 1 on 1 then, then by no means are they unbeatable opponents even though there is a difference in <<Level >>"

"Fuun. It doesn't matter if there is a difference in physical abilities, I would still win."

"E-err…….we would win if we topple the flag right? Listening to everyone's talk, It sounds like you all want to fight with the << Level 3 III >> people though……..."

Miyabi looked troubled at our appearance.

[Well, I guess I want to fight since we are at it anyway] [Ja---. That's right] [Fuun, I'll fight and win it]

"Ya-re Ya-re……I understand your feelings but, everyone in the class are comrades in the <<Kouryou battle>>. There might be one vs one when it is needed in the strategy but, it would be helpful if you all prioritize the victory of the class as our basis."

Tachibana made a wry smile while telling her opinion after she saw the reaction from the 3 of us.

"The class' victory huh……Tachibana has that kind of side huh."

"What do you mean about that side?"

"Well look, the first thing that would come into me and Tora's head would be to fight with someone stronger. While Tachibana feels like you would work hard with everyone."

During the <<New blade battle(Newcomer battle)>> too, I recalled back the feeling she was pushing Miyabi's back.

"Fumu……..it is probably from the circumstances in my previous environment. In terms of future prospects, I will have to lead everyone in the dojo so; my feelings in stressing on harmony are strong."

Maybe because Tachibana was the next heir of a big dojo, she was like that.

Recently, she has gained popularity because she became the mediator of the class and attended to people with that type of conscious.

"The power of harmony instead of the power of individuality huh…….I would immediately think about myself so, I seriously think Tachibana is amazing to be able to think like that."

"Wh-what are you saying, all of a sudden……."

Tachibana averted her sights in embarrassment.

"And, judging by the way you said it just now, I hear it as if you and I are completely different."

"Hnn? Do we have something in common?"

Me who was the first one who brought out the individuality and Tachibana who places importance on harmony, I wonder if there was any common point between the two of us.

"Fufuu. Even though I am like this, I pretty much hate to lose you know."

"…….Haha, well that goes for me too."

After talking about myself happily, Tachibana opened her eyes wide in an instant and laughed back.

"Alright then, now that the 2nd year members are decided, let's go back to the class room and have a strategic meeting  If you all lose, then I'll beat you all up ♥"

(What <<Tsukimi(she)>> said does not sound like a joke……..)

While thinking that, I stood up from the seat.

"Ah……..."

On the path that led out of the training area, I saw the gold girl with a butler attending her entering the room and stopped my legs .

"Lilith……..."

"……..."

After the gold girl saw me, she sharpened her sights towards me-------

She did not talk to me and continued going down to the battle field.

(What is she planning to do……?)

I wasn't the only one that had that question.

Not only my 1st year classmates, but the eight 2nd year members who were just selected, were also staring at Lilith.

It was only normal. For the 1st years, she was the transfer student that had completely not shown her face in the classroom since the first day's HR.

For the 2nd years, it was because an unfamiliar student and what's more a foreign beauty had suddenly appeared.

In the middle of the gathering eyes of curiosity, Lilith stopped in the center of the battle field before saying something doubtful to the ears.

"I am sorry since you only just got all your members selected but, can we have the <<Kouryou battle>> now. But, taking into account the tiredness you all have, I will take you all on alone."

"---------Wha!?"

Shock was running about in the training area.

With just the contents she presented, most of the people became taken aback and could only stare at Lilith.

The one that regained his composure first was a second year male------one of the selected members talked to her in astonishment.

“Oi oi, what are you saying after appearing out of nowhere suddenly. Saying things like the <<Kouryou battle>> and taking us on alone, I don’t get it.”

“……Then, I will teach that body of yours.”

“Huh? What did you say……..”

“I won’t say it twice.”

Instead, she showed it with her actions.

“<<Blaze>>------”

In response to the <<Word that carries strength>>, the <<Flame >> dance around-------and manifested the <<One kind of a blaze>> (Unrivaled Blaze).

“T-that’s……”

The <<Gun>> (Rifle) <<Blaze>> which is thought to be non-existent.

The young man getting pointed by the gun------no, almost every student there doubted their eyes.

Immediately, a dry gunshot echoed and the young man shook his body for an instant before collapsing backwards.

While looking at that appearance, Lilith rotated the <<Gun(Rifle)>> in her hand.

After a moment of silence, roars of anger were released.

[What are you doing!!][Hey, what are you trying to pull!?][You picking a fight!!]

The 1st years held their breath when the 2nd years released killing intent.

Lilith made a cool smile and looked towards the visitor seat while gathering the sights on her.

“Looks like things won’t settle peacefully, so can I have the permit for the <<Kouryou battle>>, chairman?”

Lilith said that brazenly at the situation she made up.

“……That’s quite sudden. I would like to hear the reason .”

“Is it okay after I am done?”

The gold girl looks like she was not planning to say the reason.

“Seriously……..your selfishness is a real problem.”

Chairman Tsukumo made a small sigh------

"I understand. I ***specially*** allow the <<Kouryou battle>> to commence now."

"Thank you, Chairman. Well then, now that we got the permission--------."

After making a wink, Lilith turned back to the selected members.

"<<Kouryou Battle(Game)>> Start!!"

At the same time she finished saying that, the gold girl slipped in to the girl holding the <<Hammer>>.

"--------!!"

She would never have imagined that she would jump into her chest area after throwing away the <<Gun(Rifle)>>'s advantage point.

Taken aback, the <<Hammer>> user was getting thrusted by the <<Gun(Rifle)>> while Lilith gave her a warning.

"Everything will immediately end if you daydream……. like this!"

*ZuTann!!* A gunshot echoed and the girl collapsed forward.

"……..6 more to go."

Finally at this point, the remaining 6 selected members switched their body and soul into battle mode.

In response the change in their expression, she narrowed her blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes and made a fearless smile.

That sharp glint in her eye makes her look like a hunter in front of its prey.

"Alright……who wants to be the next one to be hunted?"

*Pann*!! The sound of a bamboo sword hitting men[2E 2] echoed.

"Okay, 1 man. Match over."

The referee let out a spiritless voice while lying down on the chairs lined up.

The practice occurring now was not any kind of special training but just a normal kendo class.

Although the <<Blaze>> we use are different, we should aim to learn martial arts from the start to end as the fundamentals and get better at using it in your own battle style.

"Fufu, you lost by 1 hit magnificently."

After I went to the waiting room after the match, Tachibana made a smile while coming to greet me.

"That's because that guy became skillful."

It seemed Izumi had good senses and was conspicuously improving these days.

If this goes on, it looked like he would progress more than Kigami who was his partner with martial arts experience.

"By the way Kokonoe. Did you learn juukenjitsu[2E 3] before?"

"Aah. Something wrong with that?"

"No……..considering all that, each time you swing your sword, I feel some kind of weird awkwardness there…….. Something like……..yes, you are hesitating or something…… ….."

Tachibana's insight was correct.

There was ***reluctance when I swung the sword.***

That's because, the sword to me is a deadly weapon.

It was an only a normal fact when speaking about it naturally but, it varied for each individual.

Because it was an existence I hated since my sister's life was taken away in front of me, so each time I swung it down------even I am reluctant to hold it. Even if it was a bamboo sword.

"……Kokonoe? Sorry, did you feel bad about it?"

"Ah……..n-no, I guess I can't trick Tachibana's eyes. Actually, it 's been like that since last time. It might be a chance just now but, I will think a lot about things like whether I should be attacking there or not."

"So I guess the fist is totally different."

"It's totally different. I am more suited for this."

After swinging my fist lightly, Tachibana averted her consciousness from my sword.

"Fumu, juu[2E 4], huh…….so the arts from your place is mainly using the body huh."

"Aah. Is there something wrong with that?"

The Juukenjitsu I learned before was just like its name showed, the combination martial arts of 'juu' and sword.

Rather than using kenjitsu[2E 5] I prefer jujitsu------from the word it looks like judo but, in reality it mainly exists of-------Atemi[2E 6](Blow), throw, Kime[2E 7]--------and that became the foundation of my fighting style.

"Errr……I have no intentions to deny the arts you learned but, I feel that it's a little consciously inclined to attacking. Advancing forward might be good but, you would eventually get big injuries someday if it's like that----------"

Tachibana sent her sights over in worry.

"Haha, so that means you're worried about me huh. Thanks."

"I-I am not really worried about you alone. It is only natural to be concerned about my friends and comrades……."

"I understand. Well, just like Tachibana said, my arts are relatively weighted towards attacking if I have to choose either one . But, it's not like I neglect blocking, I got taught half-way because of circumstances."

"I see. I guess it can't be helped since everyone has their own circumstances……."

Things like transferring schools probably floated in her mind.

Tachibana did not ask any further and agreed.

"Hey, Kokonoe. I might still be immature but, I think I can teach you something decent."

Tachibana's movement could become a reference for me.

Especially the defensive body movement and blocking was probably beneficial to apply in the usage of the <<Shield>>. However-----

"To me, this is something I desire but, is it really okay to say that you will teach someone else in another style that easily?"

I heard that technique leakage in the arts was extremely strict.

I wonder if this thing is okay for Tachibana who is the next heir for the old martial arts style of a distinguished family.

"Of course. The Tachibana door is always open and is always interchanging with other arts and skills. But, my guidance is going to be strict so be prepared."

"Haha, please be gentle with me."

"Fufu, inside the 18 Tachibana arts there are techniques to handle fighting with weapons unarmed so, I think it would definitely be beneficial for you. However-----"

After making a small distance, Tachibana continued her words.

"Leave these thoughts after ***we fight her***. I would feel sorry breaking your battle style's balance with techniques remembered in hasty preparation."

"……We are going to fight with her-----Lilith, huh……"

While pondering, I recalled back the time just a few hours ago.

The memory of Lilith's <<Kouryou battle>> she commenced in her own arbitrary……..

Speaking of results; it was Lilith's one-sided win.

Many vs one and completely in the disadvantage, what's more there were 3 <<Level 3 III>> in the 2nd year's side.

I found this out later but, Lilith's <<Level>> is <<Level 2 II>>.

Taking the victory even though her physical abilities are certainly lower than the 3 <<Level 3 III>> is one of the reasons why she got the name <<Exception>>.

<<One kind of a blaze Unrivaled Blaze>>------<<Gun Rifle>>.

We were shown that <<Power>> in front of our eyes fixedly.

"Alright……who wants to be the next one to be hunted?"

At the same time as she spun her <<Gun[Rifle]>>, *Come on* she beckoned them with her hand.

2 people were provoked by her.

One of them was a << III[Level 3] >> and from what I could see the other one was a boy with a powerful physique holding the << Mace>>.

Both of them closed the distance, and lunged an attack almost at the same time.

Lilith avoided the << III[Level 3] >>'s attack without making any large movement-----

*Gakinn*!! And blocked the <<Mace>> with her <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

However, Lilith did not hold her ground there and got blown away.

(……..No, she *jumped* just now!!)

The moment the gold girl who jumped backwards to kill off the impact, was about to hit the wall-----

She made a vertical turn with her body and fixed her posture before kicking the wall and flew up.

She then shot a bullet at the << III[Level 3] >> while in mid-air.

Next, the moment Lilith landed on the ground and rotated the <<Rifle Gun>>, she swiftly pointed the gun at the <<Mace>> user and------shot his chest.

I heard someone muttered [Amazing…..] at the movements that looked like it was from a stylish hard-action movie.

But, in the battle field there was another meaning of surprise there.

“N-no way……..for those guys to get beaten that easily……!”

“What is with that <<Blaze>>……”

Just 10 seconds right after Lilith announced the commencement of the <<Kouryou battle>>, 3 people-----what’s more among them there was 1 <<Level 3 III>>------were defeated and the 2nd year selected members were getting agitated.

Agitated, which meant it was a chance.

“Like I said, if you day dream……..wait, I'm not obligated to say it twice.”

Before the 2nd years regained their composure, Lilith pulled the trigger and another person collapsed-----

She then easily dodged the attack of the comrade she made an enemy out of and counterattacked.

The only ones remaining were the <<Level 3 III>> <<Duo>>.

“Well then……..this would take around 1 minute I guess.”

*Kurun* Lilith rotated the <<Rifle Gun>> in her hands.

(That is a habit more than a provocation.)

However that trivial habit-------even though it was for an instant but certainly, she would not shoot.

And the remaining 2 <<Level 3 III>> did not miss that instant.

They were holding a <<Small sword>> and <<Scaramasax>> respectively and attacked the gold girl.

Different from just now, Lilith made a huge body motion to dodge for the first time at the sharp blade combinations.

But she could not run away.

There was a difference in physical abilities and she was not allowed to run away.

The 2 blades were attacking in repeated rapid succession and Lilith was only on the defensive.

But, the moment after she dodged the <<Scaramasax>>-----

“How about this?”

While twisting her upper body, Lilith moved the <<Gun(Rifle)>> behind her hips and shot a bullet. It was a so-called acrobatic shot.

The <<Small sword>> user was the one who collapsed.

The moment his <<Duo>> collapsed, the <<Scaramasax>> user took his sights off Lilith for an instant.

---That chance became fatal.

His legs got swept and he tumbled down-------and at the same time he raised his face, the gun was thrust towards his forehead.

“Right at the 1 minute mark I guess.”

Lilith made a fearless smile-----

And immediately, the gunshot to indicate the end of << Kouryou battle>> echoed throughout the training area.

"I am sorry to say but, you took 1 minute 6 seconds."

"A-ra, that's disappointing."

Rather, she replied back happily and Lilith turned her <<Gun(Rifle)>> into the <<Flame>> and scattered it.

While looking at that appearance from the visitor seat, the gothic girl started talking to Lilith.

"The <<Kouryou battle>> is something to allow the 1st years to gain experience by fighting stronger opponents on equal ground depending on the strategies and-------at times, possibly defeating the opponent."

"Yes, I know."

The Chairman raised her eyebrows at the gold girl's careless reply.

"Then why did you do something like this, commencing it alone and what's more, destroyed the original schedule date by wishing for the commencement of the <<Kouryou battle>> to happen, I would like you to tell me as promised."

"I want to host a party."

"……What do you mean?"

"I am saying that I want to host a party to deepen my relationship with my classmates. And what's more I want to make it grand."

"In what way is that related to the <<Kouryou battle>>."

The Chairman asked again at the reply that was not an answer.

"That's because I had no choice. The <<Kouryou battle>> was clashing with the date, when I thought of borrowing the arena."

"…….Which means, you wanted to end the <<Kouryou Battle >> quickly for your own personal reasons."

"Bingo. That was helpful, I can finish this faster."

The Chairman made a sigh at Lilith who winked.

"Seriously…….you did something problematic for me……I have to either arrange something with the same contents again in the future or maybe prepare something different……..this is a headache."

"Then there is no problem."

Just what is, everyone in the training area lent their ears to Lilith 's words.

"Just like what you saw, my ability has surpassed the 2nd year selected members. If you say it is possible to defeat stronger opponents on equal grounds depending on the strategies, then……. ……could you show that to me?"

"……..I see. Which means, you want to hold a dance party."

"Yes, that's right. We will dance. The dress up would be << Blaze>> and the flowing song would be dances of sword strikes."

"Kuhah, this ojou-sama is one hell of a rampaging horse."

Contrary to the words she said softly, Tsukimi made a smile.

"Let's see, the title would be-----"

While saying that, the gold girl stopped at one point.

"<<Survive>>."

The target her sights were pointed at was-----me.

"……Just how much did you mess her up."

Inside the echoing sound of bamboo swords hitting, Tachibana asked me while I was recalling back the events from a few hours ago.

A few days ago, I roughly told everyone about the case of me being dragged outside the academy by Lilith.

I did not tell her about the <<Duo>> matter, but a lot happened and I got scolded by her.

"Seriously……."

Tachibana made a big sigh at me who replied back with a wry smile.

"-----With that said, when you all go out together with your escort, just take a position and pay attention. Of course for attacking, too, be very aware for sniping------"

(……Sniping huh)

While receiving Tsukimi's lecture blankly, I was reminded of Lilith's <<Gun(Rifle)>>.

(3 more days left to the <<Survive>>……..)

In replacement for the <<Kouryou battle>>, the event hosted by Lilith that was decided opened hurriedly-------the <<Survive>>.

The contents of the new <<Blaze practice>> rules are below.

○Everyone in the 1st year vs Lilith alone.

○Usage of the <<Blaze>> is permitted.

○Time limit is 1 hour.

○The place is the northern block of the A La Mode.

○Either one of the following is the victory condition for the 1st year team.

A. Everyone is not eliminated (Everyone is not unconscious).

B. Scatter the rose attached onto Lilith's chest.

Only 3 things changed.

First was the opponent.

Even though it became one person, Lilith defeated the selected 2nd year members with ease.

She is <<Level 2 II>> like us but, it was better to think that she is much stronger than us judging by the abilities we saw.

Next was place.

There were 2 reasons why the A La Mode grounds were selected.

The first one; if the place had many obstructions then the 1st year team would be extremely at a disadvantage. It made a lot of sense from what I saw from that one battle held in the training area.

If it was a place with obstructions, then wouldn't the premises of the academy be okay too?--------the answer to that question is the 2nd reason.

It seemed (According to Lilith), it was more interesting to fight in a shopping mall compared to the school.

Incidentally, the A La Mode was reserved by an Ojou-sama of a big company for the reason of making an independent movie-----which will never be completed.

The last would be the victory condition.

Regarding this, I think we have quite the advantage.

Lilith will have to continue running around and hiding, and needs to eliminate every one of us who just need to survive.

It was not hard to imagine how annoying that would be, if I were in her shoes.

(Nonetheless, I have no intention of running around.)

For the second one, it would be our victory if we scattered the rose on Lilith's chest; it was very like her.

In order to show her confidence that she would not lose if she fought normally, she imposed a handicap onto herself.

But even so, the gold girl probably thought that her victory was something unshakable.

(The source of that confidence is the <<One kind of a blaze (Unrivaled Blaze)>>---the <<Gun (Rifle)>>, huh……..)

Just how should I fight an opponent with a super far-range weapon while I am a super close-combat fighter.

I know that it was only natural to somehow get close to her no matter what but----------

(Bullets that surpass the speed of sound……how am I going to slip past that……)

Originally, it would be suitable to go with the **No plan** like the <<New blade battle (Newcomer battle)>>.

But this time, I have to make a counter-plan for this <<Survive>>, the possibility of things ending before I could even get close to her was very high.

(I can't dodge that as expected……)

And when I was worrying in my head-----

"Hello hello! Kokonoe-kun!!"

I got called out by a loud voice and Tsukimi was staring at me when I noticed.

"Did you listen to Sensei's talk?"

"Ah…….so-sorry, I did not listen."

After I apologized, I could hear laughter coming from everywhere in the class.

"It would be problematic if you don't listen properly…….. even though I said that, I was talking about how the class has ended a little earlier because I taught you all everything I needed to teach."

When I looked at the clock, there were only a few minutes left to the end of the class.

"Then I don't have to really pay attention……."

"You didn't pay attention to the last part because you were daydreaming right?"

"Uu……."

When I fumbled my words, Tsukimi brought her face closer and moved her mouth without letting out her voice.

"I'll scold you, you know."

There was probably no mistake that she would destroy me.

"By the way~, what was Kokonoe-kun daydreaming about? Is it perhaps about Lilith-chan?"

"…….Yes, that's right. Even though I said that, I don't mean it in a weird way; I was just thinking how I should fight against the <<Gun(Rifle)>>."

"Just dodge the bullet "

"Don't ask for the impossible."

I shouted in reflex. But------

"Ahaha, It's true that ***it is impossible for your current*** <<Level>>"

I understood Tsukimi's announcement-----and several people moved their expression including me.

"Haaaai, Sensei. I have a question."

That slow voice was from a girl called Kibitsu.

Just like that absent minded personality, she did not leave any good results in practical skill practice but her studies were quite good.

I often spotted her talking closely with Miyabi.

"Since you said it is impossible at our current <<level>>, then are you saying that we can dodge it sooner or later?"

"Un, once your <<Level>> gets to <<Level 4 IV>> you can somewhat dodge it I guess♪"

"Seriously……."

"Honorifics♥"

"Is that true……."

"Of course, of course  You will become somewhat able to see it ♪"

Together with Tsukimi's tone, it was unexpectedly hard to believe.

But, if that was the truth, then it would be okay to call us the << Exceed>> beings that surpassed humans.

"That's amazing---.but, I feel <<Level 4 IV>> isn't really that far away----"

Not feeling that surprised, Kibitsu said that in a calm tone.

(It's true that it's not that far away……..)

It's 2 more to go if I think that I am <<Level 2 II>> now.

As if to deny that thought, Tsukimi extended a finger and swung it left and right.

"That is unexpectedly far you know. Reaching << Level 3 III >> is still bearable but, the << Level 4 IV >> wall is very very high. So high that around 3 or 4 people at most are only able to reach it every year."

"-----Wha!!"

There were various reactions, there were people who raised their voice, turned speechless, and stood up but most of the students were surprised or in discomposure.

That was only normal. Judging by the first year students, it's like saying around 70% of us would drop out really.

"Ah, but but, you all are qualified to graduate the moment you all reach << Level 3 III >> so relax Look, it would be unfavorable for the Dawn organization if they asked for too much ♪"

A relaxed atmosphere spread out at Tsukimi's follow.

As expected from the Dawn organization-----it looks like the academy side thought about that too.

But, if the system is like that then------

(It would be great if they did not kick out the loser in the enrollment ceremony……..)

The ponytail girl floated in my mind.

Are they saying that they have no use for people that couldn't survive when they have to live.

Cutting them off just because they failed in an exam once was a little------

No, it should not be a small loss, thinking in future prospects.

In the first place, as long as people who have the <<Qualification>> are rare, it would be very inefficient since not everyone was able to enroll if they wanted to.

However, that question stopped and left a small thorn inside me when a boy asked Tsukimi a question.

"Sensei, why is sublimating from <<Level 3 III>> to <<Level 4 IV>> that tough?"

"Hnn, I think it's obvious that there is only 1 difference through maths. Well, to make things simple, almost everything until <<Level 3 III>> is physical ability enhancement. But-----"

Tsukimi made 3 fingers stand at first but, made it four once she reached the middle of her talk.

"Mental strength enhancement will start from <<Level 4 IV>> and it would bring out the true power of the <<Blaze>>."

<<Blaze>>------a weapon that was able to defeat someone without physically injuring them.

However it has highly classified information that, if killing intent was put inside, it would become just as deadly a weapon.

I thought that was all there was to it.

If I were to name other advantages then, I thought it would be around the specificity that we do not need to carry it around because it was different from normal weapons but……

(True power--------what kind of power is within the <<Blaze>> ……..?)

Unfortunately, the chance to find out about that was postponed.

"Well, if you want to know the true powers at <<< Level 4 IV >> then confirm it yourself with your eyes when you get to that, and class is going to end any time now ♪"

The chime rang just at that timing.

"Well then, we will be having physical enhancement training like usual in the afternoon so, be careful not to be late "

After saying that, Tsukimi left the classroom.

"-----Ah, yeah yeah."

The moment I thought she did that, she came back with movements like a playback.

"For the sake of my cute cute students, and because Kokonoe-kun begged while crying, I will tell you all the method to handle the<<Gun(Rifle)>> ♪" I don't remember crying nor did I beg, but I kept silent since I was curious about what the method was.

While looking at everyone in the class holding their breath, Tsukimi made an annoying long pause and-----

"Dodge with your spirit ♥"

She told us a completely useless method.

(I was an idiot to expect something……)

"……A union?"

Since there were clear skies today, we decided to spread a sheet out on the lawn outside and have lunch on it today.

There was a different kind of charm, being surrounded by stacked boxes cramped with many dishes from the cafeteria buffet under the warm sunlight.

Pleasant winds blew past by the smell of grass tickling my nose, and it felt as if the food was more delicious compared to usual.

In the middle, Tachibana asked us if we should make a union for the <<Survive>>.

"Umu. You all know that there are people that have already teamed up right? I thought it would be good if we team up and challenge her just like them."

Although everyone in the class were comrades in the <<Survive >>, it's not like we were a big rock.

If there were people that wanted to fight then there would be people that would want to run and hide to avoid losing consciousness.

That was why the people that chose to fight got along together and joined hands, and several teams were made just like Tachibana said.

From what I saw from Lilith vs the selected 2nd years, she was not someone that we could beat just because we gathered more heads and everyone most likely understood that.

But, the range of strategy would broaden if we increased in numbers and the winning percentage would also increase.

So Tachibana invited us after thinking about that.

"If it is okay with you all, how about it?"

Tachibana turned her face around and looked at me, Julie, Tora and the rest.

"…….Well, I don't mind but, how about you Julie?"

This had nothing to do with the <<Duo>> this time…… nevertheless, I'll try asking Julie------

"If Tooru wishes for it."

After she answered, it looked like Julie was planning to fight as a <<Duo>>.

"If that is the case then let's team up. Pleasure working with you, Tachibana."

While saying that, I got a hamburger.

"Umu, it's decided then."

"Fufu, let's work hard together, Julie-chan."

"Ja---"

"What about you Tora?"

"Fuun. Normally, I don't like grouping up to fight…….but, even I know the likelihood of me winning is exceedingly low if I fight that woman honestly like an idiot at this current stage."

(You could have said it honestly……..)

"So it's okay to say that the members here are in a union right?"

Tora nodded and Tatsu who was stuffing food into his mouth * Muga**muga* nodded too, and with this the battle union with the usual members had been established.

"So let's decide how to fight then."

After I said that while picking up the octopus sandwich, Tachibana *I have waited for this* made a smile.

"Fufu actually, I have already thought of several plans already. Would you let me explain it together with the building map? Of course, you all can say anything you want if you have an idea or something."

"You're really into this."

While feeling a sense of admiration to her, I took a bite into a chicken nugget.

"Fufu, it's only natural. I told you before but, I hate losing and I like making plans like this."

(As expected from a Shogi lover. Now that I think about it, she said she made lots of plans during the <<New blade battle(Newcomer battle)>> too, and defeated 3 to 4 groups…….)

……While recalling back the things I heard during GW, I picked up a Tatsutaage[2E 8] with my chopsticks.

"Ah oh yeah. I have something to say before telling the plans-----"

*Mogu**mogu* while I was stuffing my cheeks with the Tatsutaage, Tachibana turned towards me.

"Kokonoe. Did you think I did not notice you eating only meat from just now!?"

"-----!?"

I was really surprised.

……Enough for the meat to get stuck in my throat.

"Hn, Hngu….!! oOfuu…….nnGu, fuooo……!!"

[To-To-Tooru-kun, are you okay……!?][What are you doing ……..]

Worried and astonished voices came flying to me while I was hitting my chest.

"Wa-ter……..! Give, water…….!!"

"Seriously, this is the certainty of divine punishment."

While saying that, Tachibana started pouring barley tea into my paper cup.

---But, I did not have the leisure to wait and took the nearest paper cup while having teary eyes.

"Uh!? Wa-wait, Kokonoe. That's-----"

I heard Tachibana say something but, I did not bother about it and washed the barley tea down inside my throat.

"My……partially……drank……."

After drinking up the cup of tea, I made a big exhale.

"……..Fu, haa……..haa……haa. I thought I was a goner……."

"Are you okay, Tooru?"

I thanked Julie who was rubbing my back.

"A-aah. Somehow……"

While nodding, Tachibana sent her sights towards me.

Although I prepared myself to get lectured for only eating meat -----

"Ah-re?"

Tachibana's face was red for some reason and she was trembling.

"What's wrong, Tachiba-----"

"Ko-Ko-Ko……Kokonoe you pervert---------!!"

Tachibana suddenly shouted that while running away.

We looked at her back absentmindedly and saw her off.

“Why……”

(It’s tomorrow huh……)

On the night before the <<Survive>>.

After getting out of the bath and leaning against the wall, I absentmindedly thought of Lilith.

The <<One kind of a blaze (Unrivaled Blaze)>> which held unparalleled power---- the <<Gun (Rifle)>>.

But that weapon was not the only one that was strong.

From the way she moved her body she showed during the fight with the selected 2nd years, it was understandable that she was quite used to fighting. That was why, I am looking forward to tomorrow's <<Survive>>.

It was clear from her attitude that this started because I rejected Lilith’s invitation, but that was not all.

I think we came up with all the possible plans we could think of , and we had only one plan to handle the <<Rifle Gun>>.

But I had no idea whether or not it was possible, and more importantly I don't know if I could get into the distance needed to execute the plan.

(I have to do it without practice, I guess. And……..)

Other than the strategy and plans, there were some things I thought I needed to do no matter what.

That is-----

"Tooru, apple tea."

"Ah……..aah, Thanks."

I regained myself when Julie called out and stopped my thinking.

After taking the cup filled with apple tea, I took a sip.

"Fuu……."

I clearly felt the hot fluid flowing down to my stomach.

Around the time I put my mouth on the cup for another sip, Julie came over to the distance where our shoulders were touching .

After she sat down, Julie drank the cup she was holding with her small mouth and *Gulp* that sound came from her throat.

"It is delicious."

"Yeah, it's tasty."

I agreed with the smiling silver girl.

The milk tea I drank with Lilith was delicious too but, this apple tea had an even better taste of deliciousness.

(Although this is just an instant…….)

Julie probably felt the same, that this was delicious too.

The time I went through with the silver girl sometimes felt gentle and calm so much that I felt guilty.

The memories painted with sadness, rage, resentment and despair, were forgotten even though it was temporarily.

I could feel the warm normal days which I had lost before.

I sometimes worry if I am allowed to feel that warmness again.

But, it's true that there was a part of me that did not want to let it go.

"……..Tooru. Are you thinking about tomorrow?"

"Aah. Tomorrow----rather, I am thinking about Lilith."

"Is that so……"

*Kupi* Julie took a sip of the apple tea and opened her mouth again.

"Tomorrow…….for tomorrow-----let's win, definitely."

"Win huh……..That's true, it's not good to think that it's okay to lose."

Let's win, instead of working hard.

Different from the way she pumped herself up during the << Newcomer battle
New blade battle>>, I thought Julie was reliable.

"Alright, then……let's go to sleep already."

"Ja---"

Around the time when the date was about to change, I was going to get to bed but-----

"Tooru. Err…….is it okay to sleep together?"

"……Tonight ***too***?"

Julie nodded when I asked again.

Yes, tonight “Too”.

Actually for the past few days, Julie had been saying she wanted to sleep together.

This became frequent, ever since the time Julie told me the reason why she was an <<Avenger>> like me on that night.

“……I understand. Let’s sleep together.”

“Ja--. Thank you very much, Tooru.”

Julie made a happy smile.

(Well, I guess I have no choice…….)

Although by accident, she had found out about my past and because of that she told me of her injured heart and memories she did not want to talk about originally.

Her feelings were probably unstable because of that.

In order to divert that sad feeling even if it was little, I continued patting Julie’s head until she fell asleep for tonight too.

Just past noon on the next day.

We went outside the premises to head to the place where << Survive>> was going to be held.

We got off the monorail and after we got on the private bus that was waiting in front of the station, the bus reached the rooftop carpark in the A La Mode in around 10 minutes.

The bus we were riding on now was the only one in this place which usually had many cars parked too.

"Seriously……..just how are they, to be able to borrow the whole place."

"What's more it seems it's borrowed for 3 days. Just how much did this cost."

After looking around the deserted parking spot, I mumbled that and Kigami matched up with my talk.

They considered that the building interiors would be more or less damaged, so they borrowed the place for a few days in reserve for repairs.

"……Fuun."

After Kigami noticed I was the one that called out to him, he raised his eyebrows and distanced himself from me.

(What is it? Did I do something to make him hate me……..?)

After I twist my neck, Izumi who was Kigami's <<Duo>> hit my shoulder.

"That fella Kigami, lost to you during the <<New blade battle>> (Newcomer battle) right? That's why he is looking at Kokonoe with rival eyes. Since he has a very sporty personality, he seriously hates losing."

"Izumi!!"

He probably guessed what we were talking about. Kigami shouted at Izumi.

"Hei Hei. So see you later Kokonoe, let's work hard. Also, please don't be angry at him."

"Aah, I get it."

With a light heart, Izumi ran towards Kigami.

"Fufuu, that was a disaster."

"Well, I can't be helped."

It seems Tachibana heard the conversation and made a wry smile, I also replied back after shrugging my shoulders.

"And, looks like the organizer is here."

I don't know what car model it was but, a high-class looking black car was reflecting the sunlight while showing itself on the rooftop carpark.

The car then slowly stopped beside the bus we rode on.

The first one that got of the car was not Lilith but her butler-----Sara.

After Sara made a respectful bow, the figure of the gold girl who was her master, appeared from inside.

With the black car as the background, the eye-catching beautiful blonde hair (Yellow Topaz) was shining under the sun and her blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes were like jewels.

A girl wearing black clothes showed herself from behind while wearing a bewitching smile.

Within the many people holding their breath at them, Tsukimi who rode on the bus to lead us mumbled something.

"Seriously, why am I the only one that has to take care of the brats……."

"Maybe they didn't want to let you on because you would cause a ruckus?"

"I'll crush you……primarily with one of the 3 great desires."

"Please no."

Since she was someone that would seriously do it, I distanced myself by taking a step back just in case.

"Everyone. There is a talk the chairman wants to present. Please keep quiet."

Mikuni-sensei started the proceedings and everyone's sights gathered on the chairman.

"Everyone, how do you do. Everyone should know this but, we were supposed to commence the <<Kouryou battle>> today. But------"

The gold girl lowered her head after the chairman directed her hands to Lilith beside her as if to introduce her.

"Due to the wish of Lilith=Bristol over here who enrolled here from our sibling academy, St Foren academy, the plan has changed to commencing the social gathering----<<Survive>>."

Even though she said it was a change in schedule, the goal for the <<Kouryou battle>> was to make us challenge stronger opponents with strategies, had not changed in the <<Survive>>.

Because of that, the chairman talked to make us have fun fighting against Lilith no matter how we do it.

"I pray from the bottom of my heart that you will all gain good experience from this <<Survive>>."

It's not like there was any special change; the whole thing would start once Lilith entered the building 10 minutes after we first entered the building.

After the explanations were over, my classmates went inside the A La Mode building one after another to start the <<Blaze practice >> which was borrowing the name of a social gathering.

But, I only took a backward glance at everyone and did not move from my spot.

"It's okay to head inside with everyone first, Julie."

"Tooru……"

After I lightly tap the silver girl's shoulder while she was slightly raising her eyebrows, I headed closer to Lilith.

"What is wrong, Kokonoe Tooru?"

The chairman stopped me when I was heading towards a different direction from the building.

"Sorry. There is something I want to talk with Lilith about before this starts------"

"I have nothing to talk about."

"……..And that is the case."

Her clear rejecting voice interrupted my words. Of course, it was Lilith.

"I have something to say no matter what."

"I won't say-----"

"Kuhah, isn't it okay? ***Specially*** allowing something small like a talk, ojou-sama."

Lilith moved her eyebrows, at Tsukimi's forced verbal argument.

It might be a revenge for making her come here on the bus or maybe she had something against Lilith who moved around as she likes by using the <<Exception>> shield-----

I don't know what her reasons were but, it was a lifesaving question to me.

"That's true. Just like what Rito says, isn't it okay to ***specially*** allow a talk?"

"……..I get it."

"Thank you for the recommendation, Chairman……..and Tsukimi-sensei."

"Kuhah. It's okay. It looks like things are getting interesting anyway."

The lifesaver had a useless reason.

“I’ll say this first; it would be a problem if the starting time becomes late if you talk for too long. Please end everything within 5 minutes okay?”

“Yes, I understand.”

After making a smile while looking up at me, the chairman took a step back.

I finally come face to face with the gold girl and called out to her name.

“Lilith.”

“……”

Even though she was averting her face away, I did not care about it and talked to her-------and lowered my head.

“I am sorry to refuse your <<Duo>> invitation.”

“……..After saying you wanted to talk, is that all you wanted to say?”

Even though she was facing away while leaving it as it is, her bad mood was straightforwardly being told.

“Aah, that’s right. I could only say the reason why I refused that time so------sorry.”

"You don't really need to lower your head. It does not change the fact you refused my invitation even if you apologize and whether you do. Of course, I have no plans to even give an atom of consideration in the <<Survive>> later."

"Aah, I don't mind that. I really want to fight against Lilith's full strength anyway."

I thrust my fist at the gold girl.

"I will go at full strength too. If both of us go at full strength, I feel we will accept each other without any reservations and stop being in the winning and losing relationship once the <<Survive>> is over."

"……You're an idiot right."

"I sometimes think that."

"I don't even know how to reply to that……."

Lilith faced her back towards me, thinking that there was nothing left to talk about.

I thought this when I saw the back of the gold girl.

Once everything ended, definitely……..

"Then, I'll wait inside. Let's talk again after this ends."

"……."

After I said my goodbyes and started heading inside the building-----

Lilith opened her mouth while facing her back towards me.

"I will become that girl's power----------you said this right."

"Yeah I did."

Lilith turned back and looked towards the entrance to the building.

Julie was being pointed at by her blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes.

"Then prove it."

The gold girl took a glance at Julie and stared at me.

"But I will not forgive that-------I will have you know how useless you are."

I did not reply to those words and ran towards Julie.

I muttered to no one in particular.

"I already know that……"

It is because I am useless, that I am here.

## Part 2

"We will accept each other if we go at full strength-------he is just like a child."

Lilith did not say anything to Sakuya who said it in astonishment.

"Sakuya-sama. We have confirmed their deployment in the vicinity. There are no problems if we start anytime."

"Good work, Mikuni."

After Mikuni finished giving out orders to his previous students , he reported to Sakuya.

This was still a public area even though it was fully reserved, and in order to commence the <<Blaze practice>>, the <<Exceeds> > deployed from the Dawn organization were securing the vicinity .

"Since that is the case, let's start this."

"Yes, I understand."

"Ojou-sama please be careful."

"Thank you, Sara. I can have fun for around 1 hour…….. well, it would be nice if they can last that long."

Lilith replied with that to her personal attendant and faced towards the building entrance before Sakuya talked to her.

"The battle between the same <<One and only (Unrivaled)>> but does not have the same <<Blaze>>, and the same two that has **driven them** away……..I am looking forward to see it, Lilith=Bristol."

"Pray that it will meet expectations……for them that is."

Last time in the chairman's room of Kouryou academy, the words Mikuni said------the person that got driven away.

Yes, just like Tooru and the rest, Lilith had driven away a << III (Level 3) >> at << I (Level 1) >>.

However, unlike Tooru and the rest, it seemed it was to measure the power of the <<Unrivalled Blaze>>.

But the biggest difference would be that the gold girl had driven that person away alone and what's more uninjured.

"I'll be going then."

Lilith swayed her blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair with her hand and entered the building.

After the automated door closed behind her, the outside sound got cut off and silence immediately wrapped around her.

"…….Fufu."

During the middle of her slow descent down the escalator that had stopped because the power supplies were turned off------

Each time she descended one floor after another, she understood that her feelings were uplifting.

Lilith was fighting with a different type of nervousness compared to her hunting hobby; she liked this electrifying atmosphere.

She naturally leaked a smile at her throbbing heart.

(Like a child, huh……..)

Even though Sakuya said that, Lilith understood Tooru's words.

But, since he said to accept each other, bringing out our full strength would not be enough.

She thought it was an indispensable condition to show the << Power>> to be able to accept each other.

(Can you keep up with me? My full strength that is.)

In that instant-----

The sound of the air and her thoughts were cut through.

A surprise attack. It was an <<Arrow>> aimed towards Lilith.

But-------

*Pashi*!! The ***arrow disappeared*** together with a dry sound.

No, it was different. Lilith caught it with her hands.

“N-no wayyyyy……..”

The girl that shot the arrow------Kibitsu was taken back by the event that just happened in front of her.

The time she regained her composure was when Lilith threw the arrow to the ground and making it turn back to the <<Flame>> .

“--------!!”

Even though she quickly nocked the arrow for the second shot, Lilith was already pointing her gun towards Kibitsu.

The moment she pulled the trigger, the gold girl proclaimed this .

“<<Survive>> start.”

Immediately, the gunshot echoing throughout the building became the starting signal for battle.

# Chapter 6 『Existence Transcending Humans

## Part 1

"What, didn't you go with Miyabi and the rest?"

I asked the silver girl who was waiting for me even though I had told her it was all right to go on ahead.

"It's because I am Tooru's <<Duo>>."

The bell rang like usual and Julie nodded.

(Even though the <<Duo>> is not related in today's <<Survive>>.)

Although I thought that, there was no way I would not be happy if she told me that.

"Thanks. Let's go then."

"Ja---. Okay let's go. Miyabi and the rest are waiting."

Maybe it was the thought of wanting to hurry up to side of Miyabi and the rest; Julie took my hands.

(Uu……..this is somehow embarrassing…….)

Julie walked while tightly holding my hand with her small hands.

After I took a small glance at Lilith for the last time, she was staring at me while placing her hands on her hips.

Once we entered the building and immediately descended 2 floors down with the escalator, we let go of our hands.

It seems the power supplies were off today so after we got down 2 floors using the escalator, which had become a staircase with big ramps, we reached a place called Nagisa plaza.

There was a path on the left side while there was an atrium connecting the first floor and right side; there was also a book store in front of us.

From this place which was located at the very east end of the building, we headed to the meeting point we promised with Tachibana and the rest located to the west-----

"Ah-re? it's Kokonoe-kun and Julie-chan. You two took your time coming down here?"

In the shadows of the shelves in the bookstore which I thought were empty, a girl-----Kibitsu showed her face.

"Just a little strategic meeting. How about you Kibitsu, why are you in a place like this?"

"Uun, I am going to ambush her here. Look, my <<Blaze>> is <<Western bow>>. I am confident in hitting someone else other than Lilith-chan if it becomes a free-for all fight."

Archery

"I-I see……."

Just how could she say that with a confident smile on her face.

"By the way Kibitsu. I have been wondering this since a while back but, how do you manifest the arrow?"

<<Gun>>(Rifle) and <<Western bow>>(Archery). It is quite different but, it is the same type of shooting weapon if I put it in forceful words.

I tried asking since it might provide a hint to a strategy.

(Is it the same with Lilith's <<Gun>>(Rifle)…….?)

"It seems I can manifest the shape of an arrow using my mental strength by having the <<Blaze>> be the medium. The arrow is like the other self of the <<Western bow>>(Archery) main body."

"During the manifestation, I have to imagine the actions. It seems it is different for each individual, but mine is like the feeling of pulling out an arrow from the quiver. It seems you can manifest it by just taking the pose if you are used to it."

"I see. That was knowledgeable."

"You are welcome. Alright, I have to go back to my stand-by spot soon. Kokonoe-kun, Julie-chan, I leave my revenge to you two ."

"I think there is something wrong, with having you assume you will already lose……."

While making a smile while making a comeback, Kibitsu once again hid herself behind the book shelf.

"Well then, it seems we are a little late so, let's hurry up and go to everyone."

"Ja---. Let's do that."

Inside the A La Mode building, which was filled with people when we visited a few days ago.

It was now wrapped in silence and it gave off the illusion as if we slipped into a ghost town.

The different atmosphere where there was no one manning the shop even though it was open made that feeling stronger.

"To-Tooru-kun, Julie-chan. Over here, over here…….!"

From far away, Miyabi was making small waves with her hands to us.

(I don't know whether she is appealing or not…….)

While making a wry smile, we met up with Tachibana and Miyabi.

"Sorry. For making you guys wait……."

"I-ya, I don't mind. More importantly, let's confirm the plan once more before it starts. First off, in the center plaza for ambush, at that standpoint in that location--------"

中央
待機
1F
2F
緑
リーリス
スタート
渚
吹き抜け

Being the group leader, Tachibana looked at the building map while she started talking about the plan.

Several situations were assumed but, the basic plan was to drive Lilith to a corner with our numbers.

After the confirmation was over, we confirmed the actual building instead of the map.

The northern part of the A La Mode which was the grounds for <<Survive>>-----

After going straight through the approximately 400 meter wide path which was stretched out from the east to west, there consisted 4 plazas mid-way through.

The names of the plazas in order were: ..Nagisa, the first eastern plaza right when we got down from the roof ..after heading west from there is Yukari ..then the Center ..finally Sora.

However, the path was not a completely straight path and each of the Yukari and Center plazas had narrow paths to use for moving around. The building has a 2 floor structure but, although this does not go for all the plazas, all of the paths connect from the 2nd floor and 1st floor through an atrium.

It was easy to move around on the 1st floor since it is wide, but since it is very disadvantageous if she attacks us from above by using the atrium we chose to fight on the 2nd floor.

Around 1 minute after confirming the place I would be stationed again, a building announcement that the <<Survive>> had started.

"It's time. Are you all ready? I am counting on you all to follow the plan!"

[Aah!][ Ja---!][U-un……..][Fuun, leave it to me.]

Leaving approximately one person out, right when we made a strong nod to Tachibana (Tatsu was silent), a light bell different from the usual one I was used to hearing, *Karan**Karan* echoed.

Immediately after that sound disappeared-----

A gunshot echoed from the east side.

"It started huh……!"

Right when we were stationing according to Tachibana's words, I could hear several more gunshots.

The sound was louder then first and, I found out that she was in battle at the second plaza------the Yukari plaza.

Even if they were not defeated by Lilith, it would probably take some time for her to come here.

And during the time I was thinking that.

"Let's go there, catch her-----!!"

When such a voice appeared, with a backward glance; the figure of the gold girl running here could be seen.

(I thought she would defeat everyone that was waiting for her before advancing but…….!)

It's true that from Lilith's perspective, she did not have to go with the opponents' plan.

It seemed the thought of her eliminating each one of us by order was mostly out of expectations.

(She's coming…….!!)

They chased Lilith to the place we were waiting for her.

"Lilith!!"

Right when Lilith ran near me, I jumped out from the pillar's shadow and stood in her way.

I was probably supposed to perform a surprise attack originally but, my role was to stop her.

And, what kind of method to use was up to my personal discretion.

Even though Lilith was making a stance with her <<Gun (Rifle)>>, she stopped and slightly lowered her gun when she noticed I was the opponent.

"Oh my, why if it isn't Kokonoe Tooru. Long time no see."

"……..That's right. I am surprised to see you again this fast."

I directed an ironic smile to Lilith.

"That goes for me too…….but this is good. I don't have to go around looking for you."

After swaying her hair with her hand, Lilith aimed her <<Rifle Gun>> at me.

"First off, I will test your true abilities."

In a situation where everything would end if she pulled the trigger-----

However, in a different perspective, you could say this was a one-in a lifetime chance.

This was the chance to practically use the plan to handle the <<Rifle Gun>> I thought of using at the real scene.

Failure would mean instant retire-----

Although this had high risks, I had nothing else.

(-----It's coming!!)

Lilith put in strength on the finger at the trigger and-----

*Ginn*!! Right after the gun fired, a metallic sound was produced.

(Success!! I ***can do this at this distance***!!)

"……Not bad. Or is it just a coincidence?"

After I blocked the bullet with the <<Shield>>, Lilith stared at me.

"If you think that was a coincidence then want to try it one more time?"

"……I'll give up on that. I will accept you as the main dish. That is why I will let you go for now."

Right when Lilith was showing her <<Gun(Rifle)>> rotating habit after firing, I raised the corners of my mouth.

"……No, I won't let you get away. It is ***our*** turn now----- Tachibana!!"

"Leave it to me!!"

Placed between the atrium, Tachibana showed herself with her <<Iron chain(Chain)>> at the front of the shop, and the gold girl reacted by moving her gun at her.

At that moment, Tatsu jumped out from the shop to Lilith's side this time.

"----!!"

Once Tachibana diverted her conscious to her by showing herself, Tatsu would attack from a completely different direction.

This was one of the many plans we had prepared.

"It's a simple but good method."

Lilith moved her sights to Tatsu and said that as if to show her composure.

*Zan*!! The <<Crescent Blade>> that got swung down made a big crack on the path but, Lilith dodged it with a back flip and landed on top of the glass fence like that.

"Tatsu!! Swing to the side!!"

If he swung to the side then she might have to make a huge dodge movement.

At the same time as I told Tatsu my instructions, Julie who was hiding behind the objects jumped out.

If it was on top of the fence then, she had to dodge by jumping away from Tatsu's attack.

*Ton*. Just like predicted, Lilith kicked the glass fence and jumped to the sky.

However, ***she was heading towards the atrium.***

"Wha…….!?"

The height was easily around 5 meters until the first floor.

If by any chance she failed in her landing, she might end up injuring herself but even so, she did not hesitate.

"It's not a bad attack but, I advise including the <<Exceed>> physical ability in the calculations."

Everyone became fascinated by the sight of the gold girl who has sunlight shining down on her from the glass roof.

The appearance of an angel descending down was shown to our eyes and Lilith descended to the ground.

However, the group standing-by on the first floor did not end with being fascinated by her.

That's because the hunter came down in front of them who were the prey.

Sword strikes, gunshot, shouts and the sound of battle echoed back.

Even after I ran to the fence and looked downwards in panic, the blonde hair had already entered the blind spot of the building's cover.

Yellow Topaz

(Damn…….!! I won't let you get away!!)

I crossed the fence and jumped down to the first floor.

After landing and spotting Lilith, there was a 5 meter distance between us.

"Ah-ra, I won't go easy on you if you chase me."

Lilith turned around and prepared her <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

(Kuh, where is she aiming……..!?)

"Tooru!!"

Julie shouted and at the same time as the bullet hit the <<Shield >>.

The bullet course slightly diverted and scratched my cheek.

"You have good luck. Or is your luck included into your abilities too?"

"Tsk…….!!"

I decided that this distance was to my disadvantage and jumped into the shadows but there was no pursuit attack.

Instead, I could hear Lilith voice together with her footstep getting further away.

"Well I don't mind. I will leave you as the main dish like I thought. Kokonoe Tooru."

After I brought my face out from the shadows, I saw the back of the blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair swaying around while leaving.

(She got away……but, there was some profit.)

---This was the first contact with Lilith in this <<Survive>>.

“Are you okay, Tooru.”

“Aah, I' m not injured. But, the guys on the lower floor……”

After I nodded to Julie who easily got down, I set my sights to the guys collapsed in the front.

Looks like there were 6 people but, they were all defeated in that short time.

It just took 1 minute for Lilith to take on the selected 2nd year members who had 3 << (Level 3) III >>. It couldn’t be helped for 6 << (Level 1) I >> to be unable to do anything in direct combat.

I then heard a gunshot from the direction Lilith ran to.

“She is probably fighting with the group in the Sora plaza.”

Tachibana with Miyabi behind jumped down from the 2nd floor path like us.

“Hyawa!?”

In spite of coming down timidly, Miyabi failed in her landing and landed on her butt.

Thanks to that her skirt got flipped up, but it stopped at a dangerous spot luckily.

"Ouch…….. ……---------!!"

Although she frowned her face in pain at first, she immediately noticed what was happening and quickly fixed the hem of her skirt .

"Miyabi are you okay?"

"U-un. I am okay but……..errr…….di-did you see……..?"

I extended my hand to her as she asked a question with a soft voice.

"I did not see so relax."

After I replied back while making a wry smile, Miyabi exhaled and took my hand before standing up.

Behind us, Tachibana muttered while lining up the people that had collapsed against the wall to let them sleep.

"Because we did not stop her, this turned into an inexcusable result to them……."

"We can't help it. She was one layer better."

"Fuun. More important than that, shouldn't we decide on the next objective for now on?"

Tora came down while saying that.

"Without Tatsu?"

"That guy is not suited for brain work. It's probably best just to let him be on the look out up there."

"I-I see……..then let's go with the objectives first…… Tachibana."

I asked the decision from Tachibana who was our leader.

"……Her victory condition is to eliminate all of us. Instead of us moving, we should go with the first plan and wait here without moving------"

"Oi, Kokonoe!! Don't let her get away so easily!!"

An angry shout mixed into our conversation from the 2nd floor.

When I looked up, Kigami and his comrades who were supposed to be camping at the Yukari plaza were there.

"That goes for you too."

There were no mistakes with what I said, since Kagami and the rest were the first ones to be broken through like us, I got irritated because there was no reason to be scolded at.

"The hell you say!?"

Kigami got angry with my reply and the atmosphere clearly got bad-----

At that moment, Tachibana and Izumi came in front of us respectively to calm us down.

"Sorry, Kigami. It is my responsibility as the team leader to be unable to stop her here. If you want an apology then I will apologize to you properly later. But for now, isn't it decided that we repair the broken formation first?"

Kigami stopped his words when Tachibana lightly lowered her head.

In replacement, Izumi was the one who opened his mouth.

"We don't need an apology since we got broken through that easily. More importantly, we are planning to chase her now like this so, if it is okay with you all, do you want to join in?"

"Izumi!!"

Kigami got angry at his partner's plan.

"Maa maa, Kigami. Isn't it okay. We are low on numbers anyway, so everything is okay if we go with this for the last."

He probably purposely did it to allow everyone to hear.

But, it might be because his natural virtue makes it hard to be hated even though he has that light feeling with him.

And since I dare not say that comment, Tachibana questioned him on the words he said half-way through.

"What do you mean that we are low on numbers?"

"Just like what you can see, 5 people were taken down when she broke through the Yukari plaza. Thanks to that, most of the methods we prepared cannot be used anymore"

Now that he mentioned it, most of the people that I saw when I crossed by the Yukari plaza at the beginning had been eliminated.

"What are you going to do? If it is okay, then it would be a lifesaver if you corner her from down there."

Izumi claimed the charge of the 2nd floor which had the lowest possibility of getting shrewdly attacked from above.

Tachibana made a slight wry smile and nodded.

"I understand. We will be in charge of the first floor."

Alliance established.

"Don't pull my leg, Kokonoe!!"

"Fuun. What a noisy guy……!"

Tora said that as if he was spitting and glared at Kigami.

"……Weren't we supposed to ambush her again here?"

I held back his voice just in case to avoid letting it reach Kagami and the rest.

"I felt that the atmosphere would get even worse if I refused."

"……..Sorry for being bad at being considerate."

"Fufu, I don't mind. More importantly, let's move too, we need to tell Tatsu about the situation as well."

"Aah, let's do that."

Everyone was gathered once Tatsu came down and just when we were about to move, I recalled back the time when I confronted Lilith just now.

"……That's it. Everyone, listen. It seems that plan to handle the <<Gun (Rifle)>> works. But, it's going to be tough if it is more than 5 meters."

"Fuun. Then the thing you have to do, is to enter a distance where the plan will work no matter what."

"That's true; it is probably limited to closing in the distance between her next time."

Tachibana nodded at Tora's response.

"Well, it is a big gain just by knowing that the plan is effective. Next would be-----"

"Kokonoe!! Let's go already!! I told you not to pull my leg!!"

A angry shout cut into our conversation again.

"Sorry. We were confirming on how to corner her."

"……Keh."

After Tachibana replied that while lowering her head, I saw Kigami spit on the ground.

It was quite irritating but, as long as Tachibana put a follow in, there was no way I could tarnish that.

"……Everyone, let's go."

I held it in and pretended to be calm before urging everyone to start moving.

"To-Tooru-kun, can I have a moment…….?"

Right when we were running passed the Center plaza, Miyabi called out in a soft voice.

"Ah…….it was scary right. Sorry."

"U-un……."

Miyabi was scared of Kigami's angry shout during the interchange we had just now.

After I apologized for that, Miyabi swung her head.

"Th-that one is okay……..but that wasn't what I wanted to talk about…… …….. e-err, its about before. …… yo-you really did not see right?"

It seemed she was still worried about the time when she fell down.

"If I saw then I would not be able to talk to Miyabi while remaining calm."

"Ah……..I see…….that's good. Fufu……"

I relaxed a little because of the conversation that felt impossible to be happening in the middle of a practice match-----

The quarrel with Kigami left a slight irritation in my heart but, I felt it disappearing.

"……Thanks, Miyabi."

"Eh……..? Ab-about what…..?"

"I just thought it's great that Miyabi is here."

"Eh……..!? Gre-great……wha-wha-what do you mean by that……..?"

I only laughed back at Miyabi who was troubled.

We were at the big path connecting the Center plaza and Sora plaza. There was about a distance of 70 meters in between.

While hiding our body behind the stores located in between, we headed towards the 4th plaza----the Sora plaza.

“Alright, Me, Julie and Tatsu will head to the right side. Tachibana and the rest head to the left side while paying attention. Tora, you are the rear guard so be careful of your back.”

Other than a big path that we were going to go through after this in the Center plaza and Sora plaza, there were small paths connected to it too.

If Lilith went through there then, there would be a chance we would get attacked from behind so, the role rear guard right at the back of the line was very important.

Tentatively, the small paths on the 1st and 2nd floor had Kigami ’s group on the look out but even so, I couldn’t say it was safe for certain.

"Fuun. You too, be careful not to get ahead of yourself and get shot straight on."

"None of your business."

"That goes for you too."

*Gon* we bumped our fists together and scatter to the left and right path.

Both groups on the 1st and 2nd floor moved.

"It's quiet, Tooru."

The sound of battle had already stopped echoing and the building was wrapped in silence.

"Aah. Let's go while cautiously."

If Lilith was defeated then, someone would probably shout in victory but, that was impossible.

If that was the case then, the chances of Lilith being on overwatch [2F 1] further up was very high; my nervousness got stronger even though I did not want it to.

I lowered my body and dashed towards the store in front while bending down.

There was no gunshot.

I confirmed if there was someone in the shop after entering but, there were no particular problems.

After I made a hand gesture saying it was safe, Julie ran here first and then Tatsu next.

Tachibana was ahead on the opposite side of the path with Miyabi following her back.

Even though we crossed half the distance of the path, we could hear no gunshots.

(It's about time she is going to snipe……)

We needed to be cautious of the stairs connected towards the roof at the Sora plaza, Tachibana said this.

But, thinking about the charge immediately at the start, we couldn't throw away the possibility of a charge attack.

Inside the oppressive feeling created by the nervousness, we slowly got closer to the Sora plaza.

"Tooru. Look at that."

Further up Julie's finger------there were 3 guys collapsed frontwards at the plaza.

On half of the stairs heading towards the roof, there were girls collapsed there.

While moving onwards with our cautiousness increased, we kept a look out at the shops while hiding our bodies-----

I got shocked when I saw a female Kouryou uniform.

But, the hair was black and was streaming down to the chest.

Near the girl with black hair, I saw one more girl leaning against the wall.

Both of them were hiding in the shop and probably got found by Lilith.

It seemed there was no one hiding in the shop, and I sent a signal to Julie behind me saying it was alright to advance.

"Tooru. I feel something is strange."

"Aah, I think so too. If there is no movement until now……"

She was moving outside our expectations again.

That thought passed my mind and hesitation was born.

Hesitation corrupts the concentration ability and a chance would be born-----

That instant was targeted.

A sudden attack came.

"That is no good, Kokonoe Tooru."

That sudden call out came from a direction I would never expect.

"-----Wha!!"

When I looked behind, the black haired girl was preparing her <<Gun>>.
Rifle

"Hesitation in a battle which has already begun is forbidden you know. It would only make a fatal chance. Like this."

She threw away the ***black wig*** which was hiding her blonde hair and Lilith made a wry smile.
Yellow Topaz

"I thought this was cliché but, it unexpectedly works."

The gun was clearly pointed at Julie.

"Julie!!"

The gunshot broke the silence and----

The silver girl dodged the bullet just right.

And at the same time, Tatsu roared and swung down the << Crescent Blade>>.

---But, Lilith dodged the attack by jumping over Tatsu's head, and the shelves got mowed down by the <<Crescent Blade>>.

*Kurun*. Lilith spun the <<Gun(Rifle)>> in her hands.

"Tatsu, dodge it-----!!"

However, my shout was useless and the bullet that was shot pierced Tatsu's head.

During the time that giant body was collapsing from losing its strength, the gold girl jumped out the shop.

She then ran up the giant ball light in the middle of the path and jumped towards the 2nd floor path.

"Julie, it's amazing, you dodged that."

"Ja--. It's because Tooru confirmed the counter plan was effective."

"I-I see……"

I could only be shocked once I heard she used the counter plan meant for a <<Shield>> defense to evade.

"--------Above…….!?"

The voices of Kigami group advancing on the 2nd floor falling into disorder from the sudden attack could be heard.

"Kuh……..! Like hell I will let you do what you want any more than this!!"

After I dashed out the corridor, I kicked the ball light and jumped up from the recoil before grabbing onto the glass fence surrounding the atrium.

After dropping to the 2nd floor, Izumi was down and I saw Lilith's back while she was thrusting the <<Gun(Rifle)>> at Kigami further ahead.

"Lilith!!"

"Oh my, why if it isn't Kokonoe Tooru. You are the main dish so, please keep quiet."

"Sadly, I am bad with waiting."

"A guy that can't wait will get hated by girls you know."

The moment Lilith said that and was about to put strength into her fingers------

"UooooOOOOO!!"

I shouted with a loud voice while closing the gap.

"------!?"

Lilith moved her sights in reflex, and her hands shook.

The fired bullet scratched near Kigami's collarbone instead of his head.

Even though Kigami got blown to the floor, it's not like his consciousness got blown away.

"Kigami, dodge it!!"

I shouted once more while swinging my fist targeted towards Lilith------the rose but, she dodged it.

However, since I swung it down in a manner of charging my body, I got between them with that momentum and prepared my <<Shield>> while covering Kigami.

"Kokonoe! What the hell are you doing!?"

An angry shout came from Kigami behind.

"What do you mean what……you are my comrade so-----is what I wanted to say but, my body moved on its own."

I did not release my sights from the gold girl while replying.

"You say your body moved on its own?"

"Aah. I refuse to see…….someone getting downed in front of me. That's why hurry up and run away!"

That scenery from that day in summer carved into my brain moved my body.

Even if I know <<Survive>> was just a practice match, and no one would die.

"……..Damn it……! Damn it, damn it, damn itt!!"

"------!? Kigami!!"

"Shut up!! Who the hell would run!!"

Instead of running away, Kigami prepared his <<Blaze>> and charged at Lilith.

Of course, Lilith did not stay quiet and prepared her <<Gun(Rifle)>> before------

Shooting Kigami mercilessly.

"It's regretful you couldn't save him. But I am just getting started."

"…….Are you planning to defeat everyone else first."

"That's right. Didn't I tell you that you are the main dish already?"

I closed in the gaps between Lilith in one go while she was making a smile.

"I won't let you do that to anyone else!!"

"How persistent. Please keep quiet."

Just like usual, Lilith rotated her <<Gun(Rifle)>> and pointed the gun at me.

*GiKiin!!* I blocked the bullet shot at my shoulder with the << Shield>>.

"I won't get hit that easily ***at this distance***"

When she pointed the gun------I expand my awareness to its maximum and saw through the firing line.

It might be hard to dodge the bullet but, as long as I know the place where she is targeting then I could use the <<Shield>> to block it.

This was the counter-plan I prepared for the <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

The drawback is, the more the distance between us kept opening, any slight change in her gun's angle would make a big difference and it would be hard to see through the bullet's path.

"Not bad……..!!"

After stepping in, I drove in my fist aimed at the rose.

Even though she blocked the attack with the gun's body, I moved to combination attacks without making any distance.

(I'll keep pushing her like this!!)

But, Lilith's calm face did not break and right in the middle of handling my continual attacks skillfully----

*Kurun* she rotated the <<Gun[Rifle]>> in her hands.

(……What is it!?)

Normally, I should be going for that chance but, my attacking hand got duller because of shock and questions.

Right after I thought the bullet shot in close-range got deflected by my <<Shield>>-----

She gave a flashy low kick like a whip to my legs that had stopped moving.

"Nguh!!"

Lilith did not relax her attacking hand and continued with a front kick.

Even though I blocked it with the <<Shield>> immediately, her goal was not to attack me.

Lilith kicked the <<Shield>> and use that momentum to jump behind and open some distance.

(Oh no, this distance is disadvantageous for me……!!)

If she opened up a distance of more than 5 meter, I would lose the ability to see through the fire line accurately.

At the same time with her firing, I jumped into a nearby shop.

"Fufu, it's okay even if you don't run away that pathetically. That was just an intimidation, so I did not aim at you. I already told you that you are the main dish."

"Kuh……!"

While hiding in the shop's shadow, it was in that instant I grinded my teeth knowing that I was being played around with.

"Kokonoe! Let's retreat for now!! You all too, retreat now and regroup!!"

Even though I could not see her, Tachibana's voice echoed throughout.

Because of Lilith's surprise attack, she probably decided our group situation could not fight in cooperation.

Especially, after losing Kigami and Izumi, the remaining people in the group on the 2nd floor became completely agitated.

(I have no choice, I guess I'll follow Tachibana's words and retreat…….!)

But, during the moment I was about to retreat------

A silver gale ran passed me.

"Julie!?"

Julie's long hair fluttered and she chased after Lilith.

"Don't overdo it, Julie!!"

"Nai. It is okay……!!"

I thought this decision was very unlike Julie who usually fought in a calm manner.

"Ah-ra, you won't run away? I was planning to let you all go though."

Lilith pulled the trigger while saying it's a different story if she came after her.

But, Julie's response was magnificent.

She dodged the bullet flying at her before kicking the wall and slashed with her <<Twin Double blades>> after closing the gap in one go.

However----

"Your movements are too honest."

"----!!"

Lilith went above that.

The moment the attacking <<Twin Double blades>> from left and right was about to cross------

The blades bounced off because she used the gun-stock to hit from below.

In that moment, Julie became completely defenseless and------

*DoBo!!*Lilith's knee thrust towards Julie stomach.

Lilith then continued by giving Julie a sokuto[2F 2] and made her go flying.

"Ka, Haah!!"

Her small body slammed the glass fence and the stainless exterior distorted-----

*Kashaaan*!! The glass broke and Julie's body got thrown out to the atrium.

"How regretful, Julie=Sigtuna. I expected you to be a little worth hunting but……."

During the time the fragments of the glass and the Silver Blonde hair was reflecting the light, the gold girl spun the <<Gun>> Rifle -----and pointed the gun at Julie.

"You ended up unable to be this girl's power huh, Kokonoe Tooru."

"Julie-------!!"

"……This is the end."

A dry sound echoed and the moment the bullet was about to pierce Julie mercilessly-----

"I won't let you."

A shadow ran away with that small body.

Chain

After hanging the tip of the <<Iron chain>> near the ceiling, Tachibana caught Julie in mid-air with the movement of a pendulum.

Tachibana then landed on the 1st floor like that and while carrying Julie and running pass the ball light and decorative plants to block the <<Rifle Gun>> line of fire.

“Kokonoe! We are retreating!!”

I immediately ran away from the spot at the retreat declaration she made again.

When I looked back at last, Lilith was seeing us off without preparing the <<Rifle Gun>>.

I could easily imagine her making a leisurely smile as usual on that face.

After heading up slightly west from the 4th plaza----the Sora plaza, we entered a store and I took a breather.

“Fuun. Looks like she isn’t coming.”

“……Aah, she probably let us go since it looks like she isn’t coming for us.”

By now, she was probably chasing the 2nd floor group which ran away in a different direction from us.

(Damn it, she is one tough opponent, more than I imagined……! Her close-combat is quite good and I would never have thought Julie would get countered…….)

"Julie, are you okay?"

"Ja, ja--……...my left shoulder hurts a little but, I am alright."

Julie replied while staggering.

Behind her, Tachibana made a stern expression.

"……..What do you mean by alright when your shoulders are dislocated. Stay down until emergency treatment."

"Dislocation, Julie…….! That is why I told you not overdo it…….!"

"……..Sorry."

Julie became despondent at Tachibana and my frowning face.

"More importantly, we have to treat her shoulder fast. It would be nice if someone has bandages but, does anyone have it?"

"So-sorry. I did not bring with me……."

Miyabi swung her head at Tachibana's question and the other members swung their heads next.

"I will go find-------"

"No, I will go find some. Tooru, you go act as a look-out."

Tora went outside the shop without even hearing my reply.

The moment he went out, [I won't take long. Leave it to me] he said that.

While thinking this might be true, I made a wry smile and saw Tora's back off.

"Thank you very much, Tomoe."

After a while, Tora found the bandages and brought it back and Tachibana performed the emergency treatment.

About the time she was about to take her clothes off, me and Tora went outside to stand guard.

"……..Even if you are treated, please be careful not to force yourself."

It seems the treatment was over so I entered the shop and Tachibana was making a stern expression.

"Maa-maa, Julie gets that too so you don't have to say it many times…… more importantly, I have to thank you. Thank you for protecting Julie, Tachibana."

"Fufu, protecting my comrades……..is……na-tural……..
"

At the same time I thought her voice was weak even though she was smiling--------

Tachibana staggered and drooped towards me.

"Ta-Tachibana!?"

After I caught her in panic, Tachibana's body relaxed and became heavy, and I noticed her breathing was wild.

"Oi, Tachibana? What is wrong, Tachibanaa, Tachibana--------!!"

Immediately, I found out.

There was a hole opened by a bullet on Tachibana's uniform.

## Part 2

There was the sound of a helicopter coming nearer from far away.

It was different from the one Lilith's personally owned and was a giant tandem type rotor.

On the A La Mode roof, Tsukimi Rito moved her sights from the helicopter up at the skies of Tokyo bay to the special monitor and muttered that.

"It's going to be the climax soon."

40 minutes had passed since the commencement of the << Survive>>-----

Almost every 1st year other than Tooru in the building had been defeated by Lilith.

"That time when silver hair was about to get defeated half-way, I seriously thought what was going to happen."

"If that happens, it would probably end without showing any good prospects."

While quietly gazing at the monitor, Sakuya made a bewitching smile and was damping her lips in the milk tea Sara poured for her .

"Oi oi, even if the silver hair is defeated, that <<Irregular>> is still left right?"

"A <<Duo>> with only one wing will not beat her."

After replying her assertion to her rabbit ear wearing subordinate, Sakuya took another sip of the milk tea.

"……..In the current stage, the both of them are not showing any promise of winning against her in the first place. Even if they were the same people that drove them away."

"Seriously, that is one unthinkable dryness from a little kid……. …….ah---, by the way, I am changing the topic."

"What is it?"

"Is ***that*** your invitee, director?"

Rito pointed to the sky and asked.

The giant wheel type helicopter floating up at the sky. It was something that could be seen at the bay coast from just now.

"At the very least, I don't remember inviting them."

"…….That goes for me too."

The guy---Mikuni who had been keeping silent until now, opened his mouth.

"Fuu, how regretful……it looks like we have no time to see the long-awaited Climax."

Sakuya made a sigh before leaving the last part of the sentence and stood up.

Around 20 brawny men got off from the helicopter.

All of the men were in exaggerated outfits, they wore helmets that only showed the mouth part, armor that covered their chest and arms on top of their battle suits, and they were holding assault rifles in their hands.

Body suits

"That is a team I have not seen before."

Mikuni said that after the men separated into left and right making a path without any useless movements.

Mikuni, who has various information connections, had all the special teams and organizations in the world in his head----- but the men standing in front of him were unknown to him.

However, Mikuni and Sakuya did not show any signs of discomposure like it were only natural.

Soon, there were 2 people walking through the center of the men in a relaxed manner.

One of them was like the men lined up along the left and right, he was wearing a battle suit but, he was wearing a different helmet from the others and was exposing his face.

His age was probably around Tooru's. It was a Caucasian teenager with arrow sharp pair of eyes.

The other one was a lean old man dressed in white clothing.

The color of the base of his white hair could not be defined but, judging from his blue eyes and tall nose, it could be guessed that he was a westerner.

After the men stopped, Sakuya took a step forward and picked up her skirt to take a curtsy.

"First time meeting you all, my visitors. What kind of business do you all have in Japan?"

"Whaat, just a little stroll."

The old man was the one that answered Sakuya's question.

"*Kusu**Kusu* Don't joke. A stroll is something you do with your own legs."

"Fuhaha, that's a harsh one. Well then…….how about having a talk with the youngsters about society while I am sightseeing?"

"Yes, gladly if that is the case."

Even though she was in front of a weird scenery of a group of men holding guns, Sakuya was not showing any signs of cowardice.

"However well, I was seriously scared that we might be shot down when we were landing."

"No, it's because this is Japan. It would be a big commotion if we do something that dangerous."

"Hahaha, that's true too. No wonder that man is in such light clothing."

"That's because there was no need for it……."

Having his sights directed to him, Mikuni answered.

It was only natural to be in light clothing.

There was no need for the <<Exceed>>'s to carry weapons such as guns.

"I see, I see. I guess this is the famous <<Exceed>> from the rumors like I thought."

The old man said the word that should be impossible for a normal person to know and *Pan**Pan* made a short clap.

However, Sakuya and the rest were not surprised at all.

It's normal. There was no way a team of normal people would bring guns along with them.

"Oya, I thought you would show some response but……."

"Sorry to not meet your expectations…….by the way, is it about time you named yourself? Or should we name ours first?"

"Fuhaha, I don't need you to do that, Tsukumo Sakuya-dono. No should I call you-----the <<Blaze Witch>>."

Blaze Diabolica

"……."

Sakuya moved her expression at this point for the first time.

"There is a reaction like I thought. Iyaa, this is good, this is good."

Although it was slight, she did show her surprise and the old man was laughing very happily like he succeeded in his prank.

"Sorry for the late introduction. I am <<Equipment smith>>-----Edward=Walker. This unannounced visit was because I wanted to meet the witch I heard of from the rumors."

"-----I apologize for not knowing a person from <<Rein>>. I am honored to meet you, <<Equipment Smith>>-sama."

Sakuya bowed her head once more with a smile.

Even though she heard the old-man's nickname, she had yet determined what kind of organization the men in front was affiliated with.

Enemy------it's not like they are. At the very least, at the current point that is.

But, it's true that it was an organization that they should be cautious about and originally, it would be normal to start exchanging a conversation without obstacle to search each others intentions but-------

"Hey, Jii-san[2F 3]. Forget the sluggish conversation already and let's get to the point. I will become sleepy if you continue blabbing useless words."

Just like her words, Rito made a large yawn in a bored manner,

The old man who called himself <<Equipment smith>> opened his eyes wide at the comment and actions of a person unable to read the atmosphere and-------

"Fuhahahahaha!! That is harsh. Ha—hahahahaha!!"

He placed his hand on his forehead and made a big laugh.

"I apologize for my subordinate."

"Iya Iya, it is an old-man's bad habit to make the conversation long. I will follow the rabbit ear Ojou-san and enter the real topic to avoid boring the <<Blaze Diabolica Witch>>."

While making the smile of a good nature old-man, Edward started talking about the real reason why he suddenly appeared in front of Sakuya.

"If I have to put in one word then it's about making an alliance. <<Blaze Diabolica Witch>>-dono, I want to borrow your power."

"…….You jest."

"Iya Iya, I am really serious. I am an old friend with your grandfather. I understand his amazingness more than anyone else and inheriting that thick blood of his, I have also heard of how magnificent you are. That is why; I am paying my respect and came to pick you up personally."

"---------I see, grandfather's…….but how regretful, my answer will not change."

Sakuya's answer *Hohoou* made Edward mumbled shortly.

"No matter what?"

Sakuya made a small nod in a natural manner at the question again.

"Fumu, how regretful. You, your grandfather and I are quite ***close***------because of that, I thought it would be possible to work together but……..let me see, this would mean-----"

"Now that the deal is off, you will use force and take our director away-----right?"

In an instant, Rito continued in the part that got opened.

"Fuhahahaha!! You sure said something interesting."

"Kuhah, but I am right, right?"

"It is just as you say, rabbit ear Ojou-san. And incidentally-----"

Edward sent his sight to the teen standing behind him.

"I am having difficulties finding a practical use of the <<Power >> I gave them. If the opponent is the famous <<Exceed>> then, it would be something that would occur easily even if I wish for it."

"Nice nice, that confidence. I really can't get enough of it."

In the vigor of almost licking her lips, Rito revealed her happiness.

"Well then, <<K>>-kun. I'll leave the rest to you. Please be careful not to hurt <<Blaze Witch>>-dono even if it is a mistake."

Blaze Diabolica

After Edward went to the back, the Caucasian teen-----<<K>> gave orders to the men at the side.

"You, take around 2 people into the building with you. Remember to secure the Bristol daughter. If she resists then, It is okay to hurt her as long as she does not die."

"……..Oh my, do you have any business with Lilith?"

"Naturally. There are a lot of ways to use her."

"I won't recommend you using her if you are going to make a trade with Dawn organization. No matter if she is the <<Exception >> they would easily throw her away if it produces an unprofitable situation."

"I don't mind. Even if I don't use her for the trade, she is a target the <<Equipment Smith>>-dono has taken a good interest in .-----okay, go!!"

3 men entered the building by <<K>>'s order.

"Errrr, what's left is…….15 people huh. Kuhah, you're going to need 100 times more than that if you are going to take me on."

"As expected from the <<Exceed>>. Rather than getting scared from this number of opponents, you say that there is an absolute difference in power……..then, I will work hard to give you the enjoyment."

<<K>> spread both his hands out and showed a fearless smile.

Although it was in a polite way, it was unpleasant to hear <<K> > words which had hypocritical courtesy felt in it.

***"That's because we are also existences that transcend humans too."***

Immediately, the group of men in the surrounding scattered around in a speed unthinkable for normal people and surrounded Sakuya and the rest.

"……...Strengthen armor I guess."

The moment the group of men moved, Mikuni did not miss the slight machine sound coming from their armor.

"It is still in the prototype stage without the adjustments made yet."

"Kuhah. Interesting."

Rito made a distorted smile and manifested her <<Fang[Tebutje] sword>>.

"To show respect to that expression that looks down on others, ***I will seriously beat the shit out of you***."

But------

"Stop, Rito."

It was her master that stopped Rito.

"Now that you have no <<Level Limit>> placed on you, the building will get destroyed if you go all out."

"Incidentally let me say this, your <<Blaze>> ***stands out a lot***, it will be annoying to fix the after-effects for me."

Being told by her master and her superior, Rito made a sullen face.

"Rito. You and I will protect Sara. Mikuni, please present them the time of silence."

After Rito stood down, Mikuni manifested his <<Blaze>>.

After seeing the <<Soul>> weapon that appeared in his hands, <<K>> made a scornful smile.

"I think this is impossible but, are you going to take on all of us with that seedy-looking <<Stiletto>>."

"Seedy-looking huh……rather, let me tell you something , I am very unsatisfied about the thought of you able to take on an awakened <<Exceed>> with that level of power. And one more thing----"

"------!! That's ……..!?"

Immediately at that ***strange scenery***--------

<<K>> gasped when he saw the ***12 <<Stiletto>> floating around Mikuni***.

Mikuni answered with both his hands spread out.

"I have 13 blades."

# Chapter 7 『Give Me Power Soul》

## Part 1

"Sorry…….I, became a hindrance……."

Tachibana was lying on the floor painfully and said that apologetically.

It seems the mental damage she received when she got shot by the <<Soul>> was quite something.

On top of being shot in her stomach, she was attacked with a strong fatigue and barely maintaining her consciousness was all she could do.

"I am sorry. It's because I got close recklessly……."

"You don't have to mind it-------I guess it's probably useless if I say that. That's why, instead of an apology……..I will say I would be happy that you give me a report of the victory……."

"……That's what she said, Julie."

"Ja,Ja-----! I will win, definitely…….!!"

Tachibana smiled when Julie strengthened her determination again, and made a strong vow.

"Fufu, there is no reason to get that worked up…… rather, I think Julie was somehow worked up from the beginning

of today…….if not, you would not have chased her that far during that time…….Did something happen, Julie?"

"…….Nai. Nothing."

It was only for an instant, but Julie sent her gaze over to me.

(------? Just now…….)

Behind me Miyabi and Tora, and of course Tachibana who was in front of me, were looking downwards so they did not notice the movements of her gaze.

"……I guess she got too worked up because the opponent is a strong one, right?"

"Fufu, I see. If that is the case then, Julie has one unexpected side to her huh……."

After I made a random follow up after seeing Julie's state, it seemed Tachibana was satisfied with that.

"But Julie, I feel that your weapon is speed……and the coolness to see it through in an instant. I hope you will not forget that and go into battle……."

"Ja---. Thank you for the advice, Tomoe."

*Pekori* around the time Julie lowered her head, a gunshot could be heard from quite far away.

Either someone who was running away from the spot or who was hiding was defeated.

“I wonder how many people are left……”

Miyabi muttered that in anxiousness.

“I don’t know. But, it won’t be weird for Lilith to be coming to this west side.”

That is why we have to make some kind of plan before then or else we have only a slim chance at victory.

“Understanding the situation is first -------our battle strength is, me, Julie, Miyabi and Tora. These 4 people.”

Julie could only swing her right hand due to the influence of the fracture.

Although Miyabi’s <<Chivalry[Lance] lance>> was a trustworthy power, it's reckless to charge directly at the <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

I can’t think of anything now but, I included the methods we could use before moving to the next confirmation.

“Like I thought, I think we should use the difference in numbers . The only ones able to keep up with her movements are me, Julie and Tora, so I think it is appropriate for the 3 of us to surround her and fight.”

"Fuun."

"Don't say that. That is why; we have to think of a way to surround Lilith."

"…….I think the Sora plaza is a good spot."

I agreed with Julie's comment.

It's because they cannot use the advantage of having more numbers, if they fought in a narrow place just like what happened in the 2nd encounter.

"The problem is the <<Gun(Rifle)>> counter-plan but, I don't know if I can bring her to an effective range……."

This is something we wouldn't know unless we tried it out.

"Please be careful if you get close too. Her taijutsu is quite something."

I nodded while recalling the fight from just now.

Although it was close quarter combat that I'm good with, I could only get one hit in.

Forget that, I was the one that was getting attacked.

If what I took was a bullet instead of a blocking then, everything would have ended at that point.

(Well, since she is thinking of leaving me as the main dish, she probably did not use the <<Gun(Rifle)>> as a method to slow me down ……)

It was thinkable that the reason why she aimed for my shoulders instead of my head or chest was because of that.

(Hnn…..?)

Suddenly, something caught on.

"Fuun. <<Gun(Rifle)>> and Taijutsu……seriously, what a nasty woman. On top of that, it is annoying that she keeps showing her easiness."

"Ahh. That <<Gun(Rifle)>> rotating habit……..--------!"

The moment I replied to Tora, I noticed what caught on to me.

It was the weird feeling that I had during the offense and defense exchange.

(Why does Lilith let that ***habit appear during close-combat***……. !?)

Although one mistake would cause the rose on her chest to scatter and result in her loss.

Was it done unconsciously, or---------

***She has to do that movement?***

(-------!!)

I felt all the pieces fit into place.

Was the ***movement Lilith kept showing to us until now*** really a habit?

If my imagination was correct--------

I recalled back to Lilith's back during the time in <<Survive>> and the previous <<Kouryou battle>>.

(Lilith normally…….no, wait……..)

"Tooru-kun……?"

Miyabi called out to me when I suddenly got quiet.

"Sorry, I was thinking. More importantly everyone, listen to me ……..this is just a possibility but------"

I turned my face to everyone and said the rest.

"We might be able to win."

Julie and Tora went out of the shop to get into position.

"Miyabi, I leave the rest to you."

"U-un……..Tooru-kun and the rest please work hard too."

I then talked to Tachibana who was lying down behind Miyabi who nodded.

"Alright then, you have to endure a little more so work hard."

"Aah, I understand……..I will only rest after I get report of the victory……."

Although it was weak, she made a promising answer.

"I am heading off now."

After I reached the Sora plaza, I went and took my position in the center.

Small paths connected to the main path and what's more, since this was part of the 1st floor atrium, this spot could be seen clearly from the 2nd floor.

In a different way, this spot was also a place where surprise attacks could hardly work and I was wary of sniping.

I would stop Lilith here and Julie and Tora who were hiding around her would come out and complete the surrounding.

(After we bring it to that situation, it will finally be the start line ……..)

After that, it would be a tightrope walking with the rope worn and patched up.

Will we really cross this rope?

No matter which it was, all we had to do now was wait for Lilith to appear-----

“Tooru……..”

“Julie. You have to be hiding.”

The silver girl showed herself from her hiding spot.

Coming from 3 sides was important otherwise we would not be able to surround her if we were together like this.

“I am sorry. I really wanted to tell you something…….so please, just for a while……..”

I could not say [leave the talk to when the <<Survive>> ends] when Julie looked so apologetically.

“…….Is your body okay?”

“Ja---.it’s a little heavy though.”

“I see……..sorry, to force you like this.”

"Nai. More importantly, I just don't want to get spotted."

After saying that, Julie touched her own chest.

The current Julie certainly has slower movements than usual.

Whether or not that reason could or could not be noticed could become one of the turning points for the battle.

"So, what do you want to talk about?"

"It's about the words Tomoe said just now------about me getting worked up."

Although Tachibana agreed with the follow up I made, I think there was something.

Our time together was not so shallow that I did not feel anything from the sights Julie had shown to me in that instant.

"It is just as what Tomoe said. I got worked up. I got worked up at that person……."

"……Is it perhaps the <<Duo>> matter?"

*Chirin* Julie nodded and the bells rang.

"Tooru refused that invitation and that person got angry too. But, if Tooru and that person have a relationship of accepting each other in this <<Survive>> then……."

"Did you think I would bring up being a <<Duo>> with Lilith?"

"……..Ja---"

*Chirin* Julie nodded and the bells rang.

(I see. That's why-----)

The fact that the number of times we slept together increased ever since I told her about the <<Duo>> invitation.

The fact she said to win which was different from the << Newcomer battle New blade battle>>.

The fact that, she said she would wait for me even though I told her it was okay to go on ahead.

The fact that she headed towards Lilith, even though I told her not to overdo it, to stop her.

The reason why Julie kept doing those actions and saying words unlike herself was a way to show her feelings of wanting to be by my side.

At the same time when I understood the consistency, I thought the silver girl was very cute.

That was why I------

"Ah……"

I patted Julie's head gently.

"I told Julie that I am happy to be with you. Those words are not lies. It definitely is true, and will stay that way."

"Tooru……"

"Are you relieved already?"

"Ja,Ja----"

I once again patted her head after Julie nodded.

"Okay. Now that you are relieved, you should get spirited again. However, don't overdo it or you will end up too worked up you know? That's because we have to report **We won**, to Tachibana who is working hard."

"Ja,Ja---……!!"

It was at that moment Julie made a strong nod.

"…….Did you forget that we are in the middle of << Survive>> now?"

""----------!!""

An utterly amazed voice came down suddenly.

When I looked up-----at the direction of the voice, a beautiful girl with a red rose attached on her chest and has blonde (Yellow Topaz) hair and blue (Sapphire blue) gemstone eyes, was sitting on the glass fence while folding her legs and was looking down at us.

Rifle

She was not holding her <<Gun>> and was not showing any intentions of wanting to fight immediately.

"That's a surprise, when have you been there……?"

"I am quite good in erasing my presence. That's because it's important for the hunt."

*Fu**Fu* she laughed while narrowing her eyes.

"And of course, that goes for detecting presence too."

"……..Did you eliminate everyone else."

"That's right. That is why I came to take the main dish. By the way-----"

Right in the middle of her words, Lilith jumped up to and took one spin before landing on the plaza without making almost any sound.

"Let's stop the slow parts okay. I came taking on the invitation so, I think you should come out too you know?"

"Fuun. You really are taking this easy."

Tora showed himself from the store he hid in, at Lilith's words.

"Well, it's predictable that he would be nearby."

"Isn't that obvious. Attacking from many directions is effective if you fight an opponent with a <<Gun(Rifle)>>."

"Haha, you are going to accompany us even though you know all that, what an energetic service."

"That's because it's more interesting that way. By the way-----"

After giggling, Lilith looked at our faces.

"What about the other two?.....even though I said that, one of them should have gotten hit by a bullet and the other one looks slow so, I guess you decided that they won't become battle strength and left them."

Inside the 2nd battle, it seems she was calmly observing the movements and reactions of the surroundings.

"You really looked carefully huh. But, Tachibana and Miyabi are-----"

"They are fighting with us."

Julie interrupted me by saying that and placed her hand on her chest.

"Like your hearts are together? I don't hate those types of sentimental feelings."

It was slight but, the smile disappeared from the gold girl.

"Strong feelings becomes <<Power>>……that is what I believe."

Although it was soft, those words were filled with a strong will.

It could be felt that she was burdened with something judging by the atmosphere which was different from usual.

"Well then, let's begin already. The last battle (dance) of this <<Survive (Party)>>!"

"Just like I promised, I will go all-out……..!!"

"I will make you know how useless you are even if you go all-out!!"

The gold girl placed her hands on the <<Astar>> on her chest and shouted.

"<<Blaze>>!!"

At the same time the <<Gun (Rifle)>> manifested in Lilith's hand, Tora and Julie ran to the left and right with me in the center.

Lilith was the one who took the initiative.

The same time the gun shot and I deflected the bullet with the <<Shield>>, our offense and defense state reversed because Tora and Julie jumped in.

After dodging the <<Symbolic Katar short sword>> Julie's <<Saber>> was next.

*JaKiin*!! However the blade was stopped by the gun's frame.

"It was a somewhat rough sword skill but, it was a heavy and good attack. But-------***your movements are duller than before***. Since you are only using one hand and sword, it would mean that there is quite some damage left I guess."

Seeing through Julie's movement turning dull in an instant, Lilith guessed the level of injury she had.

In a blink of an eye, she rotated the <<Gun Rifle>> before, pointing the gun towards Julie this time.

However, the silver girl that had regained her inherent coolness guessed the line of fire from the gun and dodged the bullet.

"It'll be a problem if you forget about me!!"

At that moment, Tora once again took a side sweep with the <<Symbolic Katar short sword>> and cut the air.

"Of course, I did not forget."

At the same time as those words, she rotated her <<Gun Rifle>> and pointed the gun at Tora this time.

"Guh…….!!"

Tora evaded his body from the shooting line immediately but, he distorted his expression.

That's because Lilith kicked his side stomach like an elastic whip.

She used the <<Gun(Rifle)>> as a feint and countered, this made Tora 's body float for an instant.

I switched with the staggering Tora and attacked.

"How about this!!"

I repeatedly showered a left jab and a right back knuckle but, it all hit the air with her bending her body.

---But, right after that, Lilith flipped up her leg while making a swaying posture.

The somersault kick scratched by my cheek and I stopped.

At that point, she landed and pointed the gun at me.

"Kuh……!!"

I immediately flipped the gun frame and diverted the gun; the bullet scratched my cheek.

Julie then closed the gap and made a pincer attack with me.

It was a hectic switch from between offense and defense.

But, Lilith's rose was not showing any signs of scattering from our fierce attacks.

Although it was good that we took Lilith's position, the biggest problem was the <<Gun(Rifle)>> existence.

She flashed the rifle that could make us unable to continue if we suffered a clean hit, and used it as an intimidation to make our step-in duller.

"What are you doing, Tooru, Julie!!"

An irritated Tora jumped in between the attack but, his movements were clearly slower than usual.

It seems he was in pain from the kick but, Tora did not say it hurt and unleashed an attack.

"Seriously, you are all so restless."

Lilith said it in a tired voice and was still showing a leisurely smile even though she was in this overly disadvantageous situation of 3 vs 1.

But even so, the momentum for victory was slowly leaning towards us.

While we were attacking from all directions, Lilith had to be constantly conscious of all 3 of our movements and could only maintain a defensive stance, thus slowly cutting her breath away.

"Eat this!!"

Even though Tora crouched and made a spin kick, it hit nothing because Lilith dodged it easily with a back step.

---But. The moment she landed, *Kurun* she folded her knees.

The fatigue finally reached her legs.

"This is the end……..!"

It was a once in a lifetime chance and Julie sliced down to finish her but--------

Lilith smiled in an instant.

"It's a fake."

"------!?"

She went for the finish but since it was a large swing attack, it got dodged again with a back step.

"Too bad, Julie=Sigtuna."

A big opening would appear if a big swing was performed, and she shot at that part.

*Giin*!! But, I got between the girls and deflected the bullet with the <<Shield>>.

"That too bad goes for you too, Lilith. The <<Rifle Gun>> won't work at this distance!!"

"……Not bad, Kokonoe Tooru. But------"

Lilith swiftly rotated the <<Rifle Gun>> in her hands.

"Don't think the same trick will work forever!"

In an instant, I focused on the gun's direction and placed my << Shield>> in the shooting line.

"------What!?"

The moment it shot-----I saw it.

That the gun slightly lowered and the shooting line changed.

I was able to see through the gun's direction because of the distance until now.

But for this time, due to it being close, my body could not react in time to the sudden change of the line of fire.

"Guaa……!!"

I shouted at the pain at my right thigh that felt like a nail had pierced through it.

"The tables have turned huh."

I fell to my knee and Lilith said it happily.

[Tooru!!][Tooru!!]

“Don’t come!!”

I stopped both of them with my hand.

“If the 3 of us gather at one spot, then we won’t be able to win even though we can win.”

“Tooru……”

“Oh my, are you still planning to win in this situation?”

*Kurun* ***she rotated the Rifle*** and the gold girl smiled.

(It’s just as I thought…….)

Not limited to this fight, and even during the <<Kouryou battle >>, Lilith would ***definitely show that habit*** once the <<Gun(Rifle)>> shoots.

I then found out there was something that could be guessed from that.

That, ***Lilith was unable to continuously fire the <<Gun(Rifle)>>.***

The <<Western bow(Archery)>> user Kibitsu said, that she had to manifest the arrow by imaging herself taking an arrow out from the quiver.

So I thought, Lilith had to reload too by using the rotation movement of the <<Gun>>.
Rifle

And more importantly, it would be very clear that she would enjoy the fight more if she was able to fire continuously, and there was no way she would not fire continuously without a reason.

"Tooru, are you okay?"

I did not avert my eyes from Lilith and listened to Julie.

"……Moving like normal looks impossible huh."

Although the pain was gone already since this was a <<Blaze>> attack, the part that got shot felt heavy.

(It would have been great if the three of us cornered her then……..)

"You all look beaten up but, are you all still going to work hard ?"

I lost my legs; Julie lost her shoulders and Tora's ribs are probably hurting.

Even if we continued fighting, forget cornering her, we would probably just be waiting to lose.

(……Which means, there is only one thing left to do.)

I made my determination and looked straight at the blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes and answered.

"That's true……Let's end this already."

"Yes. It is a little regretful but--------everything must have an ending."

The gold girl prepared the <<Gun (Rifle)>>------

And I prepared myself too.

I pulled back my fist like I am going to shoot a bow and charged up.

Julie and Tora jumped to the left and right respectively at that signal.

"Just now, you asked that was I still planning to win right? Aah, that's what I am planning to do. We will------Win!!"

Together with a roar, I released my strength.

***Towards my own feet.***

*Pikiiiiiiii!!* The Thunder god's (Mjolnir) strike released with the << II (Level 2) >>'s strength making a crater.

"Wha…….!?"

Small and large fragments flew around and Lilith jumped back in reflex.

The moment I confirmed that, I looked upwards and shouted.

"Now, Miyabi------!!"

"Teyaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh-----!!"

A loud shout echoed in the building.

Coming from the stairs heading towards the roof on top of the Sora plaza, Miyabi was holding the <<Chivalry Lance>> and was charging-----no, was jumping down.

"------!! You've thought of that!!"

The Thunder god's Mjolnir strike was to limit the directions Lilith could run away to.

Next off would be Miyabi who was standing-by performing a lance charge downwards for an ambush but, the plan I prepared did not end here.

Rather, I was convinced Lilith would not let this end and continued the plan.

Lilith responded to my expectations by dodging the lance charge and------

Almost at the same time, Julie and Tora charged at her.

"This timing……..! I can't evade!?"

Lilith guessed our intentions in an instant and the leisurely smile disappeared from her expression.

Even if she defeated one of them, the remaining person would definitely bring her down by attacking the opening due to the reload.

This is what we aimed for……..!!

"I won't…….be defeated!!"

The gun was pointed at Tora.

Even though Tora dodged the bullet immediately, it scratched his head and broke his balance before falling down.

Julie then slipped into the gap.

She aimed for this instant that Lilith had not finished reloading yet.

"It will finish with this……!"

In that moment-----Lilith smiled.

"……***You are the one that will be finished***, Julie=Sigtuna."

"-----!?"

The moment Julie swung down her <<Saber>>, Lilith thrust the <<Rifle Gun>> which was not reloaded yet towards Julie's chest-----

Almost the same time the blade was about to dig into her upper arm, she pulled the trigger.

*Zutaan*……..!! A dry sound echoed throughout and Julie's small body got blown away before----

She fell to the floor.

"How regretful, it was a fake. Did you think I need to reload?"

Lilith sent a sidelong glance towards me while making a smile.

It was a trap from the start.

She skillfully prepared a sweet lie by making us think that she reloaded by rotating the <<Rifle Gun>> starting from the <<Kouryou battle>>, and made us aim for that chance.

But-----

***"I predicted that possibility too."***

"Eh…….!?"

Lilith showed an outwitted expression when she saw me lifting the side of my mouth.

*"I am saying that I saw through the lie and disclosed the truth!!"*

Immediately-----

*Chirin* the bell rang.

Lilith turned around and------her blue (Sapphire blue) gemstone eyes was filled with surprise.

She saw the silver girl flying in the sky with one black wing.

"Wha….!?"

*Zan*!! The brandish got through faster than Lilith pulling the trigger.

"With this…….it's checkmate."

The <<Gun>> (Rifle) left the gold girl's hand-----and dropped to the floor.

"N-no way…….I'm sure I shot through your chest-----……!! That's!!"

Lilith noticed.

She noticed the existence of the <<Chain>> making a dull glow inside the hole she made on Julie's uniform.

"No way, you wrapped that around your body……so that' s why your movements got duller."

Lilith said that while touching her cut right arm with her left hand.

"So there are 2 ambushers huh……..even I will fall for that."

Lilith moved her sights towards <<Gun (Rifle)>> that fell to the ground, and made a sigh of admiration.

Yes, it was just as what Julie said just before the fight, we were fighting together with not only Miyabi but also with Tachibana too .

"Tachibana's hard work profited."

The <<Blaze>> would disappear if she faints-------and that's the reason why I told her to work hard.

"……Fuun. Don't forget I went along with your plan."

Maybe it was from the impact from getting grazed from the bullet; Tora was placing his hand on his head while saying that.

In order to make Lilith shoot continuously and to make her get deluded that I was deceived, so we had him take up a role to do it.

Similarly, although it was great that the ground got destroyed by my Thunder god's (Mjolnir) strike but, the skin on my fist tore because it

was not able to withstand the impact and was stained with the blood that spurted out.

"……I really thought you got deceived."

"It's true that I was deceived at first…….but I recalled back. That last time, I saw Lilith shooting the <<Gun(Rifle)>> in A La Mode."

That time, Lilith pulled the trigger without any gaps in between .

Then why did she start that action at the <<Kouryou battle>>.

It's obvious. She started it to fight me in this <<Survive>>.

There was a reason why she did not fire continuously.

The reason why she did this was to flip the table, right before the moment I'm convinced of my victory.

"Lilith. Continuing this anymore now that you can't hold the <<Gun(Rifle)>> is unreasonable."

It seems Lilith was having a hard time lifting her arm because it got slashed by Julie, so if we kept fighting like this, there was no chance for her to win.

"……"

"Lilith. It's over-----"

"I won't say it twice."

"Eh……..?"

Those blue gemstone[Sapphire blue] eyes shot towards me-----and she made her move.

"…….Not yet."

There was a strong will of light coming from her eyes.

"I won't give up!!"

"-------!!"

The gold girl kicked up the <<Gun[Rifle]>>.

Her right arm could not move because it got slashed.

But even so she still grabbed the <<Gun[Rifle]>>, even though it is going to be hard to move her left hand because of the damage in her upper arm.

"Kuh……..!"

I immediately pulled back my fist stained with my blood and took a stance.

(I can scatter the rose with the Thunder god's[Mjolnir] strike impact wave if it is in this distance!!)

Lilith put strength into the finger pulling the trigger and the moment I was about to release the power stored in my fist------

*Bannn*!! A different dry sound from Lilith's <<Gun (Rifle)>> echoed and at the same time, I received an impact on my shoulders before dropping to my knees.

"Ga,aah…….!?"

It was slightly late but, a scorching heat and pain attacked.

"Uu, Guh, aah…….Wha-what……..?"

After I turned behind while withstanding the pain, there were 3 guys standing there with battle suits (Body suits) on.

The guy in the middle was holding a pistol and there was gunpowder smoke coming off the muzzle.

(This guy…….shot me……!?)

"That was too close for comfort huh. Lilith=Bristol."

The guy called Lilith's name in a cheeky voice.

"Lilith……..who are these people……..?"

Even though I asked while pressing my shoulder which was twitching in pain, she swung her head.

"I don't know. Who are you all? What do you all want!?"

*Kii* Lilith glared at them while demanding the group of men to reveal their identity.

“The <<Equipment Smith>>-dono’s subordinate------you should understand if I answer that right? We came to pick you up as ordered by sir.”

It seems Lilith got an idea from the man’s reply and was taken aback for a moment.

But she immediately reverted her expression and pointed the gun at the group of men.

“……..I refuse. I don’t have the duty to follow someone who rudely stepped into my dance party with those dirty feet. And if you wanted to escort me in the first place then, start with sending an invitation first.”

“Ya-re Ya-re……that’s your answer after having me walk all the way down here.”

“I don’t remember asking you all to pick me up.”

“……Hey you guys. What did sir ask us to do in this type of situation?”

“If she resists then, we give her a beating as long as she doesn't die before bringing her up, was what he said. Kehihii.”

The guy behind made a nasty laugh.

"-----Looks like it."

Faster than his words, the guy pulled the trigger.

But------

*Jigiinn*……!! The leader guy raised his eyebrows, ***when the bullet got deflected by the <<Shield>>***.

The guy asked in a pissed manner when I stood in between Lilith and him.

"……..What are you doing, brat."

"I don't know what's going on but, Lilith is our classmate. More importantly, I will be troubled if you bring her away before our battle is settled."

"Kokonoe Tooru……"

"You've said it, Tooru. I will not forgive a victory from a time up because that woman got dragged away."

"It is just as Tooru says. That's why------we will protect this person."

Julie and Tora stood beside me.

"You brats. I will have you know the price for acting like a hero. "

Gunshot's echoed one after another.

"Whaaat……!?"

Even with all that, I blocked it with the <<Shield>> and the guy was surprised.

"Unfortunately, I got trained quite a bit by Lilith today."

"…….Even if you all are brats, you all are still <<Exceed>> huh. But……..how about this!!"

The guy prepared an assault rifle this time instead of a pistol.

"------This is bad!! Julie, Tora, get away!!"

It's okay if it was a single shot but, it was impossible to block random shooting like I thought.

"Kyaaa!?"

I immediately carried Lilith and jumped to the side and Julie and Tora jumped away too.

[Tora, I leave the left to you…….!][Fuun, I know!!]

Almost at the same time they regained their posture, Julie and Tora jumped towards the guy.

But the 2 guys standing-by behind the leader stood in front of Julie and Tora and------

Blocked Julie's <<Saber>> and Tora's<<Symbolic short sword(Katar)>> with a knife.

"Not even a budge……!?"

It was not surprising for Tora to be surprised. Different from our looks, our physical strength enhanced by the <<Lucifer>> could not even be compared with normal humans.

"Kuku……did you think you that were the only existence that transcends humans?"

"What did you say……..!?"

The moment he felt shaken at that devastating statement, Tora was kicked away and Julie got grabbed on the arms before being swung around and got slammed to the ground.

However, the shocking part of the guys in battle suits(Body suits) had only begun.

"Fast…….!?"

Julie's expression changed.

That's because, ***Tsukimi was the only person faster than her*** until now.

Those guys had speed that could not be caught up by Julie, even if her body was at her top condition.

Having their speed and powers exceeded, the guys freely attacked with their assault rifle and knife quickly cornering the both of them into a predicament.

“Julie!! Tora-----!!”

“Oooto, I am your opponent.”

The moment I directed my senses towards the both of them, the leader stood in front of me.

Although I was going to immediately use Thunder god Mjolnir’s strike, the shoulder that got shot started to hurt and I couldn't put any strength into it.

“Ku, ah……!!”

I drove my fist in like that but, it got blocked with one hand easily.

“Is the <<Exceed>> only this level?”

*Mishiri*……..He put in strength into his fist to crush mine and I raised a shout from my throat.

The guy showed his teeth and laughed.

“I’ll teach you this, brat. This is how you punch someone……. !!”

*Doboo*!!My stomach got crushed from the impact he punched up to my stomach, and I throw up the air in my lungs.

“Ka…….ha,a……!!”

Another existence transcending humans other than <<Exceed>>.

After I got to my knees from that tremendous power, my chin was kicked upwards.

“Guah…….!!”

I got blown away and fell to the ground pathetically.

“To-Tooru-kun…….!!”

“Do-don’t come here, Miyabi……! Run away……!!”

Even though I shouted to Miyabi who was running towards me, the leader’s moves were faster.

He grabbed her arm, and Miyabi got caught.

“Kyaaaa!? L-let go!!”

“Kuku……..This is a <<Exceed>> even though it’s like this. Looks like she’s quite strong but, she is no different than a little girl to us.”

The leader twisted Miyabi’s wrist to restrain her before pushing the pistol to her head.

“Hii…..!?”

"It's noisy so stop shouting…….alright, the other brats stop resisting!!"

The battle concluded at this point.

Julie and Tora who were still putting up a fight, saw Miyabi getting captured before throwing their <<Blaze>> away.

"Wasting my time, squirming around like that!!"

Tora got sent flying by the guy he was confronting.

The other guy again, raised his fist at Julie.

"St……..Sto-p……!"

"Wait!!"

The one that stopped that fist, was none other than Lilith.

"…….I will go with you all quietly. That's why; I will have you stop laying your fingers on my classmates any more than this."

"What if I say no?"

"Your goal is to ***bring me back without killing me*** right?"

After saying that, Lilith took the fragment of the ground------ and thrust the sharp part to her own throat.

"Release your dirty hands from that girl."

"Okay okay. I'll do that if you come with us quietly. But-----"

The leader pushed Miyabi aside to release her.

However, the guy remained pointing the gun at Miyabi while walking closer to Lilith----

*Paan* a dry sound was produced when he slapped the gold girl's cheek.

"You have to calm that mouth of yours too, Bristol's Ojou-san."

"I'll leave it at that."

Lilith made an angry glare at the guy that was *Niya**Niya* smiling happily.

"Okay then, we will have you go up like this."

He pushed to the gun to Lilith's back and the group of men were about to leave the Sora plaza.

"Le-Lilith….!!"

When I called her name, Lilith stopped and turned over to me.

"……Sorry I did not finish the match, Kokonoe Tooru."

After saying only that, Lilith left the place with the group of men.

"Damn……..!! Those bastards….!!"

I could not do anything.

I got irritated at my own incompetence and slammed my fist to the floor.

"So-sorry……i-if I did not get caught……U-uguu……..."

Large teardrops were flowing off Miyabi's eyes.

While Miyabi was breaking down crying, Julie patted her on the head.

My chest hurts badly at that scene.

"Tooru. I think this is not possible but, you are not going to say this will end right?"

"……Aah, of course."

After nodding to Tora, I encouraged my creaking body and stood up.

"Miyabi stop crying."

"B-but, but……I…..Uuu……..."

"It's okay. No one will blame you. Also, I will save Lilith so stop crying. It's going to be okay."

"Tooru…….kun……."

Miyabi looked up at me with wet eyes and nodded back.

“I will go too. I am Tooru’s <<Duo>>, I will be together when you fight.”

“Fuun. Don’t forget me too. I won’t be able to settle down if I don't give them a payback.”

“I see……Thanks you two.”

In spite of being inferior in the last battle, the fact that the both of them did not have their hearts broken made them trustworthy.

“But, what are we going to do? It is annoying but, those guys are stronger than us. There is no chance of us wining if we fight straight on.”

It was just as Tora said.

We had to make a clever plan for victory, using a surprise attack.

(Think……! Is there any plan that could make use of each of our distinctive characteristics……..!?)

I looked towards my fist stained in blood and thought------

“------!!”

Immediately, the giant hole made by this fist entered my sights.

“Tooru. Did you think of something?”

"……..Aah, tentatively. It might work if ***I add a little arrangement to it***. And----"

I knelt down with one knee in front of Miyabi before saying.

"Miyabi wait right here."

"Eh……..? Bu-but…….I also……."

I swung my head at Miyabi who looked troubled.

It was because I noticed Miyabi's body was trembling in small intervals.

Even though Miyabi was released, she was seized by fear.

That is why, I swung my head.

"I promised this before right. I will come back for you. The situation is kind of different from that talk, but I will definitely protect that promise. I will save Lilith and come back to pick you up, so please wait here."

After I said that I *Pon**pon* lightly hit her head.

"And greet us with a smile when we get back, Miyabi."

"Tooru-kun……."

This was the second floor of the Nagisa plaza located at the furthest east of the A La Mode northern block.

Immediately after I reached here, Lilith and the group of men came up the escalator.

“Kokonoe Tooru…..!!”

After Lilith and the group of men recognized me, they showed their surprise.

“……Brat. How did you get here first.”

“There are many back lanes. I came here first when you all were taking your time walking here.”

I used the small paths instead of the main path the group of men used and overtook them.

“Also, you guys said that the Sora was “Deep” in and have her go “up”. Which means you came from the roof. And in order to head back to the roof, you have to pass through this Nagisa plaza.”

“I see. Then one more question, did you come here ***alone***.”

Yes, I am alone. Julie and Tora were not in front of the escalator connecting to the roof.

"Of course. I came here to save Lilith. It will be a problem if you bring her away when the match is not over yet."

Hearing my answer, the group of men made vulgar laughs and Lilith shouted angrily.

"Don't say stupid things already and retreat, Kokonoe Tooru! Did you think you can win against these people alone!?"

"I'll win……! I------We will win!!"

"……Don't make me say it twice you idiot!!"

"You don't make me say this twice too!! We will reach you with our hands and protect you!!"

After saying that, I clenched my fist-----and pulled it like pulling a bow.

"Brat…….are you perhaps going to take on an opponent with an Assault rifle barehanded?"

"Aah, that's right. However, you guys aren't what my fist is targeting though."

"Don't say stuff that does not make sense you brat! I'll mince every other part-----other than the part hidden by that small << Shield>>!!"

They pulled the triggers of the assault rifles pointed at me.

*Gagagagaga*!! The gunshots were enough to tear my ears apart. I held out the <<Shield>> towards the countless bullets attacking.

But of course, I could not deflect all of them and just like the man's declaration, my flesh was getting scrapped off and several bullets pierced through my body, arm and legs.

"Uguh……..Guaah…!!"

I groaned at the pain attacking my body and was about to lose my strength.

(Endure it! I promised to save Lilith and go back!!)

I lowered my sights straight down in front of the endless muzzle flashes.

"Go through------!!"

I used everything my body could mutter and slammed the floor with Thunder god's strike Mjolnir like just now.

The only difference was that this was ***the second floor***.

*Bishiii*!! The cracks that took an instant to spread out, reached the feet of the group of men.

The men shooting blindly were slightly late in noticing because of the muzzle flashes released from their weapons-----

And in the next moment, the 2nd floor foothold started to collapse.

“Lilith!! Come!!”

I extended out my hand to her right in the middle of the collapsing foothold.

“Kokonoe Tooru!!”

While dodging the stray bullets which had lost their target, the gold girl jumped into my arms.

“I leave the rest to you two, Julie, Tora-------!!”

[Ja---!!][Leave it to me!!]

I heard the replies of both of my trustworthy comrades standing by on the 1st floor----

The two <<Exceed>> turned into two blades and charged towards the wreckage falling down with high-speed.

They ran through the wreckage like threads weaving its path and they slashed the men each respectively-----

“Yo-you brats-------!!”

*Zuzaa*!! Both of their sword lines crossed in an X at the leader for last.

A loud sound echoed throughout the building immediately.

Dust rose up and the group of men got buried in the wreckage.

But----it still wasn't the end.

"You damn bratttttttttttttts!!"

Even though his armor was sliced apart, he had been slammed against the ground, and was crushed by the wreckage, the leader still stood up.

"I will kill youuuuuuuuuuuu!!"

After pointing his bloodshot eyes from inside the broken helmet to me, the man took out his knife and charged at me.

My fist was broken so I had no weapon that could beat the guy in one hit now.

However----this goes ***only for me.***

"Lilith!!"

I shouted to the gold girl in my arms.

"Lend me your <<Soul>>!!"

Everything was told with just those words.

The <<Flame>> danced and the <<Gun[Rifle]>> appeared in Lilith's left hand.

"I will do the aiming!! So------you pull the trigger!!"

I nodded and placed my hand on Lilith's thin and flexible finger ------

"This is……..the endddd--------!!"

A gun shot echoed throughout.

"……Tooru was too reckless."

When I was right in the middle of performing emergency treatment to my crushed fist, Julie made a seemingly angry expression.

"Iya, I could only think of that during that time and……."

"…….To crush your fist just because of that reason, are you an idiot."

Tora silently nodded at the astonished voice flying over from Lilith who was leaning against the wall.

"But well……..."

"Hn?"

"……..Thank you for coming to save me."

Although the last part was soft, those words perfectly reached my ears.

"You're welcome……..by the way, is it really okay if we don't head up to check?"

"It's okay. There is no way both Mikuni and Tsukimi would fall behind opponents that we can beat. And if they are currently fighting then, we would only be a hindrance if we go."

"Well that's true."

I could only agree to her sentence, especially the last part; I then made a sigh.

But, there was something else I was curious about those men.

"…….Hey Lilith. You know about their boss, the------- equipment whatever you call it right? If it is alright with you, can you tell me?"

"……..Sorry. I can't tell you even if I am the <<Exception>> ."

(Well she said that even if she is the <<Exception>>, so it might be related to the so-called dark side of the academy like that time with Tsukimi……..)

I gave up asking for more when I saw Lilith saying that with a sharp expression.

Soon, around the time my emergency treatment was done, I raised a lively voice to change the atmosphere.

"……Well then, let's go pick Miyabi and Tachibana up then!"

"Ye----. Let's do that. We made them wait for quite a long time."

"Haha, it took us quite a while."

But suddenly-------the gold girl suddenly stood in front of us, when we were about the head back inside.

"Wait, Kokonoe Tooru."

"Lilith……..?"

The gold girl pointed at the rose at her chest and said.

***"It is still not over."***

"……I, on top of my fist being crushed, I took some bullet hits you know."

"You're noisy. That is why I waited for your emergency treatment to end. You still can move a little right."

"O-oi oi……..Are you serious……..?"

"Of course. In the first place, weren't you the one that said------- It will be a problem if you bring her away when the match is not over yet."

Lilith flicked her yellow topaz hair, before continuing.

"I also can't use my dominant hand so, accompany me to the end. Weren't we going to accept each other."

"Accompany with her, Tooru."

After saying that, Tora pulled a button off his school uniform.

"……..I get it."

I took my position while making a sigh. I can't put in any strength but, it is probably possible to at least scatter the rose.

Not long later, the button Tora flicked right up reached the summit and started to fall-------

*Kii---n*. Using the sound of it dropping to the ground as the signal, Lilith and I moved at the same time.

After a moment, the rose scattered-----

And this time, the curtain for the <<Survive>> closed.

---In addition, it's a different story that both Miyabi and I became embarrassed when she came hugging me when we went to pick her up, and Tachibana who looked like she could not walk was making a big rampage when I tried to carry her.

## Part 2

"Fuhahaha. As expected from the <<Exceed>>. It looks like being un-adjusted is no match."

After looking at his subordinates lying on the floor while groaning in the surroundings, <<Equipment smith>> made a laugh.

Not only was their opponent Mikuni uninjured, there was no stains on him and that showed that the fight that took place just now turned into something so one-sided that it could not be called a fight anymore.

"There is also no reply from the people that headed down."

After the loud sound ended, there was one reply from the transmitter so <<K>> shrugged his shoulders.

"Fumu. I never would have thought they would lose to students. Iya iya……it seems you have quite some excellent students there."

"Thanks to us having especially promising students this year, I am really looking forward for the future."

The faces of the people that took out the people that went down floated in Sakuya's mind and she made a smile.

"Well then, what will you do next? If your side wants to leave, then we will not lay our hands on you all any further."

Blaze Diabolica

"Hou, that is thankful. Well then <<Blaze Witch>>-dono, I will generously follow your words. <<K>>-Kun, order those who can move to retrieve the people that went down."

After she told him that they could leave, the <<Equipment Smith>> accepted it without any shame.

Soon, the retrieval of the subordinates that got taken down by Tooru and the group ended; <<K>> and the group finished their preparations for evacuation.

Blaze Diabolica

"Well then, we will be leaving now. <<Blaze Witch>>-dono------let's meet again someday."

"Please, as you wish."

It was during that time Edward got onto the helicopter after turning his heels around and <<K>> was about to follow him-----

After seeing them, <<K>> stopped and directed both his arrow-like eyes to them.

There were 3 people that took his attention.

One of them was their target, the gold girl.

Silver Blonde

Another was a small girl with Silver hair.

And the black-haired young man carrying a girl standing in between them.

<<K>> made a hunch that this boy was the one that took down his subordinate.

For a short time, Tooru and <<K>>'s sights crossed.

"…….Looks like we will meet again soon."

That was a prediction. However, it was close to a conviction.

The brief encounter reached an end just like that.

While staring at the giant helicopter, Sakuya whispered out.

"…….<<Equipment smith>>-sama. We are the same and yet different. That is why our paths will never intersect."

Her mutter did not reach anyone's ear and got blown away by the wind just like that.

# Epilogue

## Part 1

"So bored……."

Right now, I was thrown into a medical ward room inside the academy because of the injuries I received from the fight with the group of men.

The sunlight shining into the white room was warm and it was nice passing the time relaxing.

However, it turned into a hellish confinement lifestyle after 3 days.

A self-proclaimed white clothed rabbit-ear angel (She was cosplaying) told me that I would be confined (She literally said it that way) for around two more days.

Since I had nothing to do, I thought back on the memories I have been recalling ever since that day.

(…….Existence transcending humans, huh.)

The words those guys said; also the commander, who was a teenage Caucasian boy, that I saw at the roof.

We will meet again.

It will probably be a fight when we do.

Those arrow-like eyes gave me a convinced prediction.

(I have to get even stronger…….)

More than now------

In order to confront ***that person*** someday……..

*kon**kon**kon*--------the knock echoed in the quiet room.

"Tooru, are you awake?"

"Aah, I am awake. Did you bring something?"

Please bring something the next time you visit--------I requested that of her to break this boring hellhole.

"Here you go, its apple tea."

"……Un, thanks."

I couldn't say that I wanted something to kill the boredom.

At that moment, Miyabi and the others came in.

[To-Tooru-kun, are you okay…….?][Kokonoe, how are you doing?][How long do you plan on sleeping?]

"Even I want to get out of here as fast as possible."

Although I said that, I was expecting the gifts the four (Tatsu included) of them brought.

Knitting set (Miyabi)-------it's disappointing I couldn't use my right hand though.

"I-I see. Sorry, Tooru-kun……."

Dumbbell (Tatsu)------Tentatively, I am an injured patient.

"Sorry Tatsu. I'll use it when my injuries get a little better."

Reference book (Tachibana)------honestly speaking, I am not happy at all.

"Fufu, it will become a way to kill time, you won't fall back in the class and you can prepare for the lessons, it's killing three birds with one stone-------"

"Miyabi, Tatsu, thanks. Tora, why didn't you bring anything……."

"Fuun. Be grateful I showed my face to you."

"Wait, Kokonoe! Why are you ignoring me!?"

"……..Julie, I'm sorry but can you go boil the water?"

"Ja----"

The moment Julie raised her hips, a knock echoed in the room again.

When everyone looked towards the door, a beauty with blonde hair (Yellow Topaz) and blue gemstone (Sapphire blue) eyes was standing there.

"Lilith!"

"…….Seriously, you are all so noisy in a medical room."

Lilith entered the room while making a tired sigh.

"Why are you here……"

"What do you mean by why……..."

Looking like she's having a little hard time with words, Lilith looked away from me and fiddled her hair with her finger.

"It's only normal to visit a ***comrade*** right?"

"Eh……?"

"What? Am I wrong? Didn't we go all-out at each other."

Lilith brought her hands forward while looking away.

After I moved my sights back to her face from her hands, her cheeks were slightly blushing.

"……Well, I have a stupid side in me too."

"Lilith……"

"And your cheeks probably hurt, right? Sorry."

"I don't mind."

I grabbed Lilith's hand and we smiled at each other while looking at each others face.

This hand connection indicated that we accepted each other.

After we let go, Lilith threw a question to me.

"……By the way Kokonoe Tooru. I'll ask this just in case so----Is that matter really no?"

I knew what she meant without even asking. It was regarding the <<Duo>>.

I faced towards Julie while replying with the same answer as last time.

"Sorry. I have a precious <<Duo>> already."

"It's okay. It can't be helped if it is like that……..but, I will not give up once I make up my mind. So call me anytime you change your mind, okay♪"

I only made a wry smile at that sentence.

But, it seems my <<Duo>>'s heart was not calm.

"…….Tooru is my <<Duo>>."

Julie was making a clear cautious expression on a rare occasion.

I felt somewhat happy when she grabbed my sleeves tightly.

“Fufu, I feel like running away if I am shown that scary face.”

Lilith giggled and shrugged her shoulders.

“Oh yeah. Different from the current conversation, there is something important I need to tell you for last.”

“Something important?”

“Yes, I won’t say it twice so listen carefully.”

“Aah, I get it.------wait, eh……?”

The moment the talked about this being something important, Lilith brought her face closer to mine---

***And those red lips touched my cheek.***

“”””Uuuuuuuuuh!?”””””

All the sights of everyone in the room were gathered on us.

“Wha-wha-wha……what are you…..!?”

The gold girl winked at me and announced this loudly.

“I decided to make you my future husband♪”

There was a slight silence before------

“Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeehhhhhhh-------!?”

The silence broke with my voice and then there was a whirlpool of shock in my surroundings next.

[Tooru. You are with that person as expected……..][Tooru-kun you pervert!!][Ho-ho-how shameless!!]

“Nonono don’t misunderstand Julie!! Miyabi, Tachibana, I didn’t do anything!! Forget that……..why am I so over accepting this-----!!”

“…….Ya-re Ya-re, these idiots are making a ruckus.”

Inside the huge commotion, Lilith was about to leave the room now that she said what she wanted to.

“Well then, I will be leaving now……..ah, Oh yeah.”

Lilith turned behind from the door and made a gun shape using her finger before----

“I will definitely shoot your feelings, Kokonoe Tooru♪”

*Ban* she said that while making that posture and this time the gold girl left the room.

## Part 2

The gentle breeze grazed their cheeks and tousled their hair.

There were 2 beauty's facing each other in the rose garden.

Yellow Topaz

One of them was a girl with blonde hair which could be mistaken for the sun.

The other, a black hair girl calling herself a witch, was facing her.

"Looks like there was quite a ruckus at the medical ward."

"Oh my, you heard it?"

"It was loud enough to prevent me from meditating."

"I am sorry about that, ***Sakuya***."

Sakuya frowned her face towards Lilith who was not showing any signs of reflection.

But she was not polite.

"Lilith. No matter how well acquainted we are, could you please stop calling me that way? You are a student of this academy and I am the chairman."

"I understand, Chairman."

The only thing that changed was the way she called her.

Her attitude remained the same, but Sakuya did not expect any more than that anyway.

"But even so, I would have never imagined that I would meet up with the <<Equipment smith>> from something random that got started by you."

"A-ra? You say that it's something random, but to me it was something we needed to aim for."

After smiling to Sakuya with only her eyes, Lilith took a sip of the milk tea.

"It's random enough. It would be great if you fought with them normally instead of making that kind of event."

"It will be boring if it is normal. Also, another interesting opponent appeared."

Lilith purposely avoided referring to who that was.

Sakuya also chose not to ask her about it.

"……So, what did ***that person*** come for anyway?"

"Alliance negotiating, a practical test is what he said. Judging from his talk pattern, it might be just as he said."

"Fuun. So, what are you going to do with them from now on?"

"I won't do anything. It's okay as long as they do nothing to us, but if they do------then they would make good sacrifices."

"Oh my, how scary."

Lilith shrugged her shoulders when she saw Sakuya making a cold smile.

"Well then------it's about time I hear your opinion regarding them."

Lilith took on Tooru and the rest.

Because of that, Sakuya purposely called the gold girl to her.

It resulted in Lilith's loss, but Sakuya was not interested in that point.

"Julie=Sigtuna……..let's see. Her mental state is naïve at this current stage and her abilities are still rough around the edges. But, her quick wits are outstanding."

Lilith took a sip of the milk tea and took a moment before continuing her evaluation.

"I will put Kokonoe Tooru's evaluation on hold, but I think the possibility of it changing is quite plausible……uun, I am convinced that it will be like that. That's because-------"

The gold girl placed her hands on her chest and narrowed her eyes as if she was fascinated.

"I felt it in my <<Soul>>. It was enough to shake it too."

Lilith placed her fingers at her lips and smiled.

"This is my truth♪"

"……..I don't understand you."

Sakuya *Fuuu*…….took a sigh at Lilith's words.

"I'll be leaving now."

"Oh my, are you leaving already? It's alright to take your time you know."

"It's time."

Sakuya replied immediately and Lilith made a regretful expression.

But even so, Sakuya stood up without showing any care about it .

"Fun times end so fast right, ***Sakuya***?"

The girl in black clothes did not reply and left using the path of roses.

"…….Your eyes only see the <<Absolute Duo>> huh."

While looking at the back of the girl called the witch, Lilith leaked a small sigh.

"Did you notice this, Sakuya? Your world is very small."

The gold girl moved her sights up to the sky.

"That is why I will end that world. Because I am the << Exception>> and-----"

"The <<Abyss ray>> that will end everything."

# Translation Notes and References

**Chapter 2:**

1. ↑ Judo move, a major sweeping leg throw
2. ↑ Woman breast

**Chapter 3:**

1. ↑ Japan Railway station

**Chapter 5:**

1. ↑ A game of toppling the opponent's flag not capture the flag
2. ↑ Faceguard hit in kendo
3. ↑ 柔
4. ↑ Soft, basically like unarmed
5. ↑ Sword skill
6. ↑ A vital hit at a person's body
7. ↑ Locking technique
8. ↑ Fish/meat flavored with soy sauce and cooking sauce, coated with starch and then deep fried

**Chapter 6:**

1. ↑ overwatch: a position where the terrain ahead can be observed, especially likely enemy positions. This position also allows for effective covering fire.
2. ↑ A karate move
3. ↑ old man